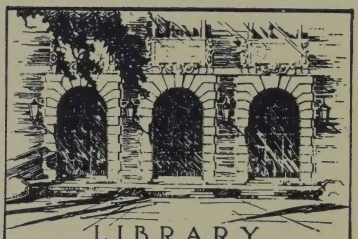
SUPPLE

HISTORY
OF THE
INVASION
OF IRELAND



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# HISTORY

OF THE

# INVASION OF IRELAND

BY THE

# Anglo-Normans.

BY GERALD H. SUPPLE.

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# PREFACE.

THERE is no history of which a correct knowledge is more rare, here or elsewhere, than that of Ireland. This ignorance does not proceed from any dearth of original records, or of modern narrative on the subject, but because nearly all the professing histories are partisan in design, and singularly disjointed and superficial in treatment. The political circumstances of the country, the animosities resulting therefrom, and the want of popular education, have been hindrances to the expression of the ungarbled truth. From our unhappy social relations, an honest history of Ireland would have been a thankless task, and competent men have avoided an undertaking involving great labour and too little reward. While animosities continue alive, and wounds are still open, few readers can relish dispassionate

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treatment of antagonists, or plain speaking concerning the short-comings, crimes, or reverses of their respective ancestors; and thus it is that most of our tomes on the subject have been produced either to suit the views and objects of the English masters of the island, or else to soothe with a fulsome flattery the misfortunes of the nation—a flattery which compels foreigners to turn from perusal of such works with contempt, and natives to neglect them, or rise from their study unsatisfied; for where so much is praise, there is but little intelligible explanation of so great national disaster.

Irish history is greatly misunderstood, and this chapter of it, the Anglo-Norman invasion, seems to be so both in its character and extent, and in the causes which produced it. It has been denominated a conquest, whereas it was virtually no more than a limited colonisation, only maintained through succeeding ages by the sword within the district of "the Pale," and without it by amalgamation and identification more or less complete with the natives. Still more generally it is supposed to have been the result of the treason of Diarmaid Mac Murrogh, and that it would not have occurred if that individual had never existed, or if there had been no ab-

duction of a Lady Dervorghil. So far from depending on a petty accident, or on any one man's vengeance or ambition, the invasion of Ireland was the inevitable consequence of the vicinity of a congregation of small and conflicting principalities, like the Irish nation, to a compact, powerful, and aggressive monarchy, like the Norman one of England.

That the Normans, few in number, though superior in discipline and equipment, should have made good their ground here, has occasioned no little surprise, and requires a word of prominent explanation. They had always the alliance of some of the Irish themselves; they had the neutralising influence on the Irish clergy of Pope Adrian's bull; but undoubtedly the main element of their success was the incapacity of the head of the Irish nation. From the social circumstances of the island, which I have endeavoured to make plain in some of the succeeding pages, it was indispensable that the office of Chief-King should be filled by a man of superior sagacity, of iron will, and unswerving hand to command obedience, and weld into union any considerable number of the contending clans. Such a man was not the Chief-King of Ireland at the period we are considering; for while the

Normans were lucky in possessing a monarch large brained and resolute as Henry Plantagenet, the Irish were unfortunate in the narrow-sighted, feeble, and temporising Ruari O'Conor. A leader like Brian Boroimhe, who destroyed the Danish aggression in the eleventh century, could have repelled the Norman invasion in the twelfth; for the English king, involved in other wars, was unable to despatch any overpowering forces into Ireland. However, if foiled in that generation, the Normans would have returned at more suitable opportunity; and though Henry the Second might have failed, some one of his successors would most probably have succeeded.

We need not read the past then merely to deplore what, from the circumstances of the time, was inevitable. The chief value of history is that in showing us the past, it may assist us in fashioning the present or the future; for a future of its own will arrive to each nation properly so called, even though it lack the present. The instinct which gives and keeps alive the aspiration for nationality is a guarantee of this—an instinct which pervades the globe almost as wide-spread as that of religion, and almost as deep-rooted and powerful in the breast of man, civilized as well as savage,—an instinct most

reasonable and practical in its demands, and most worthy of the attention of a practical age, for, as Montesquieu observes, "no nation ever attained to real greatness but by institutions in conformity with its spirit,"—an instinct not implanted idly by Providence, but indicative of the great fundamental truth that each nation has its own peculiar mission and uses in the scheme of creation—this instinct for self-management active and permanent in the nation as in the individual man.

It ought to be easier for an Irishman of the resent time to write without prejudice of the Anglo-Norman invasion than of any subsequent period of our history—not because the events are remote, for they were the first links of a chain which has extended to our own day—and we have long memories in Ireland; but because in these memories the devotion to their adopted country of the descendants of the Normans obscures, in no slight degree, the wrong inflicted by their fathers. They became "more Irish than the Irish themselves;" their blood is in our veins, and through the wars of Elizabeth, Cromwell, and William, the Norman-Irish sacrificed life and lands in the national cause as freely as the more ancient population. I am conscious of no

prejudice in preparing this brief record of a most momentous epoch in our troubled history; but I confess to strong sympathies, and why should I not? It is a matter of patriotism to sympathise with one's own countrymen in their struggle with the stranger; and it is a matter of humanity to sympathise with the invaded against the invader. Let me trust that these natural sympathies have not beguiled me into withholding or discoloring the truth as I have found it, or where it has seemed to me to be so.

G. H. SUPPLE.

2nd February, 1856.

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# THE INVASION OF IRELAND

BY

# THE ANGLO-NORMANS.

## CHAPTER I.

### WHO THE IRISH WERE.

When the first Norman invaders looked out eagerly from their galleys at the south-eastern coast of Ireland, which they were approaching, they beheld the shores low and the country generally level. Ireland, which on her three Atlantic sides rears lofty cliffs against the fury of the ocean, and lifts between it and her great central plain a further broad barrier of mountains or hills, is tame on her Leinster coast, where the districts are with one exception flat, and the margin of the sea only a strand. Leinster appeared to the over sanguine gaze of the followers of Fitz-Stephen, to kneel to England and invite

her, even as its suppliant monarch Diarmaid has just knelt to King Henry in that castle in Aquitaine. The mountains of Imale and Ranelagh, subsequently known as Wicklow, are the only frowns of nature and type of resistance along this shore. The rest of the coast will become "the Pale," or English counties of Louth, and Meath, and Dublin, and Wexford; but the clans of Wicklow will repulse the spoiler from their glens, and more than four centuries will elapse after the formation of "the Pale," before the banner of Saint George shall flutter untorn in the mountain breezes.

Those eager Normans leaped from their ships on the fertile soil of Hy-Kinselah, pleasant to both foot and eye. Sheep and oxen cropped the herbage of a wonderful verdure, and great herds of swine munched acorns under the boughs of the luxuriant forests. The invaders at their first coming encounter a fair and open country, rich booty, and but partial and ineffectual resistance from the inhabitants, rude and surprised. But all Eirè is not Hy-Kinselah, or in the gift of Mac Murrogh; and, by and bye, iron-handed descendants of Raoul, ye will come to the morass and the mountain, and the awakening spirit of the disunited and conflicting clans, and the

country where a few brief days have sufficed to establish a colony, it will take four hundred sanguinary years to overrun. It is the characteristic of the Celtic spirit to be more easily bent than broken. A single generation reduced the Saxons of England to submission to the Norman, and a second generation completed the conquest. Three centuries (dating only from the last Tudor, the first English monarch of all this island) have not coerced into acquiescence in foreign rule its Celtic population.*

The nation which the Normans found striving tribe against tribe within these shores was Celtic, a member of that ancient family which once inhabited so much of western and central Europe. Their identity was evidenced in their language and character, as it had also previously been in their profession of the mysterious Druidic faith. Strongbow might have applied to the Irish many of the terms which Cæsar had used in describing the Celts of Gaul twelve hundred years before.

Of the three great successive immigrations which the Irish annalists tell us had peopled the

* Hy-Kinselah, alluded to in the above paragraph, comprised the modern counties of Wexford and Carlow, and was the family territory of the Mac Murroghs, Kings of Leinster. Eirè or Erin is the native name of this island.

country, viz. the Fir-Bolg, the Tuatha-Danaan, and the Milesian, the first named must have been Celts, since we have abundant proof that they continued to form the bulk of the population after the arrival of the other two races. They may have come hither from Gaul or Britain, or even Spain, in which country the Celts had early pushed the aboriginal Iberians from some of the northern provinces. From all those countries Ireland was easily accessible even in that remote age. The date of the Fir-Bolg arrival is entirely conjectural, for it is lost in the haze of antiquity; but it may have been some twelve or fourteen centuries before Christ. They were conquered by the Tuatha-Danaan, a race whose civilization excited so much wonder in the people they subdued, that the traditions speak of them as wizards. The story of their arrival, and the description of their leader, display to us at once their skill in arts unknown to a primitive state of society, and the astonishment which such created among the rude aborigines. They approached the shores in a mist raised by their enchantment, and their leader was "Nuadh of the Silver Hand," which contrivance was supplied by two of his people as a substitute for the member which he had lost. Credne

the goldsmith wrought the silver hand, and the chirurgeons Diancecht and his son Miach fitted it on.* Those Tuatha-Danaan were, in all likelihood, Phœnicians, of whose visits at a very early period to the neighbouring island of Britain there is accredited proof.

The third race which came to conquer and settle in Ireland was Miledh, or Miledh Espaine (the warrior of Spain), and his sons and followers, or the Milesians, as they are now popularly called. The most reasonable investigations set down this invasion at a few centuries before the Christian era. From the coming of the Fir-Bolg and from that of the Tuatha-Danaan to this date, there must have been many accessions to the population of Ireland from the kindred nations of the neighbouring countries; for instance, such was a settlement of the Cruithne, or Picts, of North Britain. But the numbers of these colonists were probably too few, and their ambition not sufficiently offensive to occasion permanent record. We have only the three great tides of settlement and conquest taken marked note of by the annalists. The Milesians, or Scots—they subsequently invaded North Britain, and gave it the name of Scotland—overthrew both of the

* O'Flaherty's "Ogygia."

preceding races, and reduced them to serfdom. Who the Milesians were is not established; but their own traditions say that they came hither from Spain, and that they were originally Scythians. Others hazard the opinion that they arrived here direct from the Baltic. There is abundant proof that the Milesians did not constitute more than a section or class of the inhabitants of this island, where they became the rulers. In the year 90 of the Christian era the Fir-Bolg serfs rose in rebellion, and seized for a short time the supreme authority, which was restored to the Milesians by one of the insurgents, who is made favourably known to us for that action and subsequent ones, by the race whom he served, as "Moran, the Just Judge." So late as the fifth century, St. Patrick, in his Confession, speaks of the Hiberionaces, or native population, and the Scots, or Milesians, as though they were still distinct in the land. In fact, the Fir-Bolg in Connaught appear to have long maintained a sort of independence; and even in modern times, O'Flaherty, in his "Ogygia," mentions two contemporary families of handsome estate,—O'Layn, in the county of Galway, and O'Beunachan in Sligo,—who claimed to have sprung from this stock.

It will be seen, then, that the popular impression that all the ancient Irish are of Milesian origin must necessarily be an error. How such a delusion arose is intelligible enough. The Milesians, having conquered the preceding races, constituted themselves a warlike nobility. The Fir-Bolg and Tuatha-Danaan, reduced to serfdom, lost their pride and individuality, and in time were gradually amalgamated with their conquerors, whose traditions, and perhaps even family names, they adopted.*

At the arrival of the Normans in the twelfth century all native Irish claimed to be Milesian, excepting, as we have seen, some few of the clans of Connaught. Whatever people the followers of Miledh sprung from—whether they had been Celts, Celtiberians, Goths, or Scythians—by the twelfth century they were Celticized; and when

* We find in the old records far fewer and fainter traces of the separate existence of the Tuatha-Danaan after the Milesian arrival, than of that of the Fir-Bolg. The Fenian hero, Goul Mac Morni, was said to be of this stock. When reduced to subjection with the Fir-Bolg, or the mass of the population, the Tuatha-Danaan obviously were amalgamated with and lost among them; and this circumstance is a proof that their position had extended no deeper in the land than that of the dominant caste—the same as their conquerors, the Milesians, then assumed.

Fitz-Stephen disembarked near Bannow, the Irish nation was essentially and unmistakably Celtic, and of the great branch of the race which called itself Gael.

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## CHAPTER II.

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE IRISH.—CAUSES OF THEIR WEAKNESS AT THIS PERIOD.

THE Milesians were a warlike people; and, in contrast to the Tuatha-Danaan, who preceded them as natives of the land, they despised trade, and detested a civic life and the restraint of walled towns. They preferred the patriarchal existence in clans, and lived chiefly on the great flocks and herds which the luxuriant meadows of the island reared in such abundance. They dwelt in "raths;" for those circular earthen mounds, which still remain with their subterranean storehouses, were then surmounted by wooden habitations. King Henry's mail-clad knights beheld with contempt these primitive dwellings, and then turned to gaze in astonishment on the stately and beautiful abbeys and churches, which, like those of Tuam and Cashel

and Disert, arose beside them. That proud abbey and this rude pavilion of plastered wattles were just types of the social contrast which prevailed in the land; of a civilization almost circumscribed within the precincts of the monasteries, and of the half predatory, half pastoral existence of the jarring clans without. Admirable specimens of the Norman or Lombard architecture of the period were exhibited by those ecclesiastical edifices. They had curiously carved stone crosses, manufactures in brass and the precious metals of shrines, croziers, and sacred utensils, evidencing an extraordinary excellence in the arts of carving and jewelling; and they had illuminated religious books—one example of which, the copy of the four gospels at Kildare, the English Cambrensis speaks of with admiration and wonder, and tells us it was supposed to have been dictated by an angel.* In all these things the light of the civilization of the sixth and seventh centuries had been preserved by the ecclesiastics, like the sacred fire of Saint Brigid, unquenched through the intervening ages of turmoil which had prevented its extension and imperilled its existence.

* See Doctor Petrie's interesting historic sketch of the Fine Arts in Ireland, in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i.

Outside the ecclesiastical boundary, the dwellers in the "rath," fierce and simple, had the instincts and the traditions of civilization, but they possessed neither its material applications nor its strength. They reverenced religion, learning, and song. With them the bard, and the *ollamh* and *filea* or literary laymen, ranked only inferior to the prince and the priest. They endowed houses of hospitality for the reception of strangers, as they did the monasteries; and they lived under the old Brehon Laws, which were a written code three or four centuries before those of most modern European nations were transcribed.

The Brehon Laws were adapted to the purposes of a patriarchal and pastoral people, such as those clans were exclusively. Their tenures were the *gavelkind*, once general in most countries; as was also their system of *erics*, or fines, for offences. The chieftainship of the tribe was not hereditary. The tanist or heir was elected from among the elder branches of the family during the chieftain's life. This arrangement, which secured the most efficient leader, had likewise its serious disadvantages in the disputes it so frequently originated. The lands were the

common property of the tribe; and they were divided into common pasture land, common tillage land, private demesne land, and demesne land of the tribe. The demesne land of the tribe was devoted to the maintenance of the public functionaries, viz.: the chief, the tanist, the bard, the ollamh, and the brehon, or judge. Each individual of the clan pastured as many cattle as he possessed on the common pasture land; and every year, to prevent unfairness, all cast lots anew for their portions of the common tillage ground, so that he who had a sterile portion one year had his chance of a fertile tract for the next.

Each clan was composed of two classes; the kindred, or original members of it, and serfs, settlers, and refugees from other clans. If these latter were able to pay an entrance fine, provision was made for them out of the tribe lands; if unable to do so, they became serfs on the private demesne lands of the chief.

The serfs, who consisted chiefly of the conquered aboriginal population, tilled the soil and were forbidden the use of arms. The clansmen, properly so called, were thus spared the drudgery of the fields, of the less respected branches of

handicraft, and of the mines;* and after a predatory excursion, or hunting the wolf and boar and stag in the mountains and forests, they assembled in the evening in their rude hall to their principal meal. The blaze of the wood fire and the glare of the torches, composed of rushes dipped in grease and intertwined to the thickness of a man's arm, or sometimes of his body, revealed those figures in a garb decent and even picturesque, reclining on couches of grass, heather, or rushes, around low tables covered with flesh and fish, boiled and broiled, griddle bread, milkmeats, butter, and abundance of herbs.†

Attendants handed round ale and mead, and in later years uisgebaugh, in methers of wood, horn, or metal. When the feast was concluded, they listened to the wonderful legends of the Senachie, or his recital of the deeds of their

* The Tuatha-Danaan were probably the first who worked the mines of Ireland, as we learn that their people, the Phœnicians, did those of Cornwall. In the list of the particulars of tribute paid by the different districts of the island to Brien Boroimhe, we find enumerated many tons of iron and copper; and there is evidence in other records likewise of the abundance of metal which the Milesians extracted from the earth by their serfs.

† Ware.

ancestors or the genealogy of the clan; or the bard struck off on the brazen strings of the clarseach, in accompaniment to his songs, that exquisite music for which the Irish harpers were even then renowned beyond their own island.*

These people were not barbarous, it will be perceived; but their condition was the rude and simple one of a pastoral life. It was not progressive. Whatever was best and most advanced in their institutions and instincts had descended to them from the past, and had no recent improvements or development in the twelfth century. We have no reason to believe, indeed, that our ancestors were not at this time more uncivilized than their predecessors of the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, when Ireland, by testimony of all historians, English included, from Bede downwards, was "a solitary bright spot in the darkness of Western Europe;" when thousands of distinguished foreigners, as well as natives, flocked to her schools;† when

* For instance, the Welsh Prince Ap-Griffith, the grandfather of Fitz-Stephen, brought Irish bards to Wales to instruct the harpers of his own country.

† See the Litany used in Ireland in the sixth and seventh centuries, preserved by Saint Aengus, in which the holy foreigners buried here are invoked. They include Romans,

she sent abroad scholars like the famous Duns Scotus Erigena, the greatest philosopher of those ages; or the still earlier Ferghail or Virgilius, who asserted the earth's sphericity seven hundred years before Columbus sailed from Palos in the same even then disputed belief; when she sent forth missionaries to christianise the nations, like Aidan to Northumberland, or Fridolin to the Rhine, or Gall to Switzerland, or Kilian to Franconia, or the two Columbs to Scotland and France. We have no reason to believe that the Irish of the twelfth century were in a more civilized condition than those of the fifth, when, as the annalist Tirechin tells us, St. Patrick, on paying the sum ordained by law, was supplied by a pagan king, who would not be converted to Christianity, with a passport and twelve guards, to enable him and his bishops to traverse the island in safety; a piece of tolerance extraordinary in any age, and which must be accepted as proof of a well-regulated state of society. How can we think that they were more civilized now than in the second century, when the Greek Ptolemy enumerates nine cities of note in Ireland, one of them the "illustrious Nagnata," near

Egyptians, Gauls, Saxons, &c. An extract from this litany will be found in Doctor Petrie's letters aforesaid.

modern Sligo;* or than in the first century, when the Roman Tacitus speaks of the harbours of Hibernia as more frequented by merchants than those of Britain, though the latter were at the time in the possession of his countrymen? Nay, we may go back six or seven centuries before Christ, to the remote days when the lawgiver Ollamh Fodhla instituted the *Fes*, or triennal deliberative assembly, in which the representatives of the druids, the nobles, and the commons all met in congress; those remote days when the houses of hospitality for strangers were first instituted, and supplied with provisions and means of amusement, including the chess-board; and when the nation, in oriental fashion, was divided into castes distinguished by the number of colours in their garments, of which the kings had seven, the bards six, and the nobles five—we may go back to those remote days, and find the inhabitants of Eirè in all probability not much, if at all, more primitive than they were found so many ages after by the Norman invaders.

Ireland had schools famous and frequented by foreigners, she had learning and Christianity in the

* Artemidorus, a philosopher who flourished in the 169th Olympiad, or 104 years before the Christian era, speaks of eleven illustrious cities in Ireland.

sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, when the rest of Western Europe was barbarous and heathen. In the twelfth century she was behind France, England, and Germany in the approach to civilization. Whence was this anomaly? How the country should not merely have stood still for four hundred years, but have absolutely retrograded, we must now proceed to enquire.

It is usual to account for this matter solely by the long and terrible Danish wars. It seems, however, more reasonable to assign it to three distinct causes, of which the one just particularised was only the most active. Those causes seem to be, first, the Danish wars; second, the antipathy of the Milesians to trade and residence in towns; third, the system of clanship.

*First.—The Danish wars.*

These sanguinary invasions commenced in the eighth century, and were not terminated until the eleventh. The prowess and ferocity of the Scandinavian sea-roamers were the terror of Western Europe. They wrested Neustria from the Franks, and they conquered Saxon England, and imposed on it in succession three of their kings. In Ireland, their power was more obstinately and successfully resisted. They were

masters of the island for no longer period than a single year, when their chief Turges was assassinated by youths disguised as maidens, and the struggle recommenced until Brien Boroimhe, in the sanguinary battle of Clontarf (A. D. 1014), terminated their efforts at conquest here. The Danes were heathen and unlettered. They burned the monasteries and their archives, and put the inmates to the sword. The struggle with them deluged every corner of the island with blood, and monopolised all the energies of the nation; and, under such circumstances, that progress in learning and civilization which, but for their arrival, might have been expected to have spread from the schools and monasteries over the island, was fatally arrested. Even when the contest with these invaders was terminated at Clontarf, the turbulent spirit exercised for three centuries by those wars could not be laid in a moment, and the native clans turned on each other the weapons previously employed against the foreigner.

*Second.—The antipathy of the Milesians to trade and residence in towns.*

So great was this antipathy, that on capturing

the Danish sea-ports, as in 942, when Dublin was taken by Congalach, and again, in 988, by Malachy,* they contented themselves with their destruction, and did not attempt to settle in them. After the battle of Clontarf, when these Danes or Ostmen were completely at the mercy of the Irish, they were permitted to remain in the seaports of Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, Cork, and Wexford, on condition of paying tribute. The Milesians, who would not themselves reside in cities, found the Ostmen useful as merchants. From this antipathy of the Milesians, we may reasonably conclude that the nine cities mentioned by Ptolemy, as existing here in the second century, were inhabited by the Tuatha-Danaan and Fir-Bolg. This unfortunate Milesian contempt for trade has descended even to our own day.† The reader need not be reminded that a rural and pastoral nation is less open to new ideas and improvements than a people of large towns and commerce; and the Irish of the twelfth century were exclusively rural.

* Annals of the Four Masters.

† Who is it that says, with epigrammatic truth, "in France the greatest crime is cowardice, in England poverty, and in Ireland trade"?

*Third.—The system of clanship.*

This was a fundamental cause of weakness. The clans were so many independent little communities; and they were too undeveloped not to abuse the full liberty which they enjoyed. They needed what did not exist in Ireland—a strong central power to restrain their perpetual feuds with each other. We may recollect too, in parenthesis, that wars between tribes are invariably more bitter than those between larger communities; for where the number is limited, each man is more personally and directly involved, and insult and injury are more individually experienced.

The five kingdoms into which the island was divided—Ulster, Connaught, Meath, Leinster, and Munster—were as often conflicting as the clans which were units of them. The election of the ard-righ, or superior monarch of the island, was a periodical "bone of contention" between the righ-begs or provincial kings; even as the election of its petty chief constantly introduced discord into the bosom of the clan itself. We have no better illustration of this strife than the condition of the island at the particular period of the Anglo-Norman invasion. Roderick O'Connor,

king of Connaught, was Ard-Righ; having, by a rare chance, succeeded his father Turlough, who had acquired and maintained the dignity by the sword. Roderick was monarch of the island, and yet the greater part of it was in open struggle with his authority. The king of Ulster and the Munster princes of Thomond and Desmond, were at war with their suzerain, as well as the king of Leinster, who crossed the sea to invite foreign assistance against him.

Nay, this last prince had not his authority undisputed in his own provincial kingdom, for we find that he was long at mortal feud with his liegemen, the prince of Ossory and the Danish chief of Dublin.

This continual civil strife checked all improvement, even of a military kind; for wars with each other brought no new ideas, which wars with foreigners would have done.

Here, then, we have a primitive and pastoral people about to encounter the strength of the feudal system at its highest development—that feudal system, one of the most consummate military organizations of any age. We have here a people warlike, and yet destitute of the warlike skill of the period. They receive the enemy on their own soil, and they are deprived of

the advantage of that circumstance by suicidal dissensions. They receive the enemy in a strong country—excess of wood and but little open champaign, as Cambrensis tells us—but their rural habits have made them ignorant of the art of assailing or defending artificial fortifications. The Irish of the twelfth century are as unprepared as it is possible to be for the danger about to burst upon them, and they do not perceive the extent and reality of that danger when it comes. We see what the Irish are; let us now enquire what manner of men are the Normans hastening to invade them.

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## CHAPTER III.

WHO THE NORMANS WERE —CAUSES OF THEIR POLITICAL AND MILITARY STRENGTH.

THE Danes or Ostmen were the inhabitants of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and composed one branch, as the Germans did the other, of that great Teutonic family which occupied the centre and the north of Europe, as the Sclavonic race did most of the east, and the Celtic the west. The ancient people whom the Teutons

pushed from their homes in Scandinavia were the Fins, whose few descendants are now to be found in the wastes of Lapland, and around the opposite shores of the Baltic.

Those Danes or Scandinavians make a huge and terrible figure in the annals of Western Europe, in the ages of which we write. The human character receives an impress from external nature; and those men, reared among the gloomy pine forests and long winters of the northern latitudes, and condemned to wrestle with the perpetual storms which lash their shores, were solemn, strong, and cruel of spirit. Their Edda or mythology, and their superstitions were dilated by the vastness and were sombre with the horrors of the Maelstrom, the iceberg, and the Arctic tempest. With them, ghastly spectral apparitions supplied the place of the prankish goblins and fantastic elves and peris of sunnier climes; and their paradise for the souls of the brave was Walhalla, where the chief joy was the quaffing of strong drink from the skulls of their enemies.

They were gross feeders and deep drinkers, like all the Teutonic tribes, with whom the physical requirements are more exacting than in the sparer Celt. They were a people of mariners,

"Dauntless riders of the waves,
And fishers of the main sea deep,"

for the fruitfulness of the ocean on those dreary shores is a compensation for the sterility of the land. The austerity of their soil and climate and their constitution of body suggested the desire to seek more favored regions, for which their knowledge of seamanship afforded them the facility. In these expeditions their standard was the ominous Raven, with open beak and wings extended; and the first flight of those birds of prey within sight of the shores of France drew, we are told, tears from the foreseeing eyes of Charlemagne. Everywhere carnage and pillage marked the track of the merciless freebooters; the wretched inhabitants abandoned their dwellings and fled to the forests, and silence and desolation took possession of the districts exposed to their descents; where, as the old chroniclers inform us, not even the barking of a dog was to be heard. The Teutonic tribes of the Franks and the Saxons, who had abandoned the worship of Odin, were no match for their fierce kinsmen, hardened by the snows and winds of the north. Surely it is a proud boast for Ireland, that her christianized Celtic clans should have resisted and repelled those dreadful sea kings

through an unremitting struggle of centuries. What the Teutonic Dane could not achieve in Erin, was reserved for the more civilized Norman—the man of mixed origin and genius, before whose lance both Teuton and Celt went down, the Saxon and the Gael. But who were those Normans ?

It was towards the close of the ninth century, while the pirates we have been speaking of were waging bloody strife in Erin, and while in England King Alfred had been obliged to fly before their ravages to the fastnesses of Somersetshire, that at home in their own country, at the court of Harold the Fair-Haired, king of Norway, there figured a certain chieftain, known to posterity by the names of Rou, Raoul, Rolf, or Rollo. He was a giant, and was surnamed by his comrades Ganger, or "the walker," because he could not get a horse of his country high enough to carry him. This chief was exiled by King Harold for some act of violence, and, as was the wont of his countrymen when fortune or restlessness impelled them to wander, he betook himself to piracy. Having augmented his band in the Hebrides by other Norwegian refugees and adventurers, he ravaged the coast of France for a number of years, and at last, em-

boldened by success and by fresh auxiliaries, he sailed up the great rivers and laid siege to Paris itself. He failed to take the city, but Charles the Simple sat on the throne of Charles the Great, and the French monarch was glad to buy off the northern giant with a great tract of the province of Neustria, and the fair hand of his daughter Giselle, on condition of abandoning his piratical practices and heathen belief, and settling down into an orderly subject of the Christian church and the French monarch.

The sea king was big in mind as well as body, and he aspired to some more permanent foothold than the deck of his Scandinavian galley. He acquiesced in the bargain, and performed a sort of half homage for the new duchy, which from his Northmen forthwith acquired the name of Normandy. He found it inhabited by a vassal Celtic population, the descendants of the Gauls who had resisted Cæsar, but who had sunk and degenerated under the iron rule of the Romans first, and afterwards of the Franks. Rollo invited settlers from other parts of France to come and swell the list of his subjects; and as his Norwegians (whose number Sismondi supposes to have been about 30,000), had brought no women in their narrow ships, they took to them-

selves wives of the daughters of the country. From this union of opposite races sprung that formidable people known in history as the Normans.

Of the mixed origin of the Normans there can be no dispute. Its facts are patent, viz., the fewness of the invaders, their not being accompanied by women, and their settling among a population almost entirely Celtic, whose language, habits, and religion were adopted by them. The great French historian Michelet goes further, and believes with reason that the entire body of the invaders were not Scandinavians, and that the army of Rollo was in all likelihood recruited by adventurers, refugees, and runaway serfs from every country. One proof of this may be found in the circumstance related by all the old historians, that Hastings, one of the most celebrated of those sea-kings, was originally a Gaulish peasant from the neighbourhood of Troyes. In a word, the proofs of the mixed origin of the Normans are numerous and manifest enough, to compel every careful investigator to recognize the fact, as Michelet, Thierry, and Latham have already done.

There is no doubt but that much of the Normans' wide-spread and singular success as war-

riors, statesmen, and diplomatists, is to be attributed to their combination of the opposite qualities of the Teuton and the Celt—the contrasted races of their origin. The Normans exhibited the Teutonic sturdiness and hard materialist grasp of the useful in every-day life, and they added to it much of the versatility and readiness, and the graces of manner natural to the Celt. They were free, too, from the physical grossness of the former people, whose gluttony we are told was a frequent subject of banter with them; and they were equally free from that instability of character and impulsive unsteadiness which have so often marred the prospects of the latter race. By this fusion, the rugged Scandinavian iron was changed into the tempered polished steel of Norman chivalry. Craft and unscrupulousness were the darker traits in the character of this singular people, who became the foremost int he middle ages for military prowess and will, or what phrenologists term "force of character." William the Conqueror, stern, able, dissembling, and indomitable, was an excellent type of the Norman chieftain; and perhaps a still better was the son of Robert Guiscard, the famous Bohemund, a warrior huge and strong of limb as his paternal ancestors the Vikings, and subtle, genial,

and insinuating as his mercurial kinsmen of the south, but regardless of honor or generosity where his interests or objects were involved.*

Wonderful strength of character and great mental cleverness, were produced by this amalgamation of races of which we have spoken, but no high order of intellect. The Norman intellect was not original or lofty, like the Celtic; which is, excepting the Hellenic, the most spiritual in Europe. The Norman mind was better calculated to ensure worldly success, because it was not soaring like the other, but was essentially "of the earth, and earthy." The Celts had genius, the Normans only talent, but that of a singularly practical and adaptative kind. They produced statesmen, generals, and diplomatists, but no philosophers or poets. Their trouveres and jongleurs make but a sorry figure beside the bards, or skalds, or troubadours of other countries.

But to return to Duke Rollo. He, with great

* The Byzantine historian, the Princess Anna Comnena, has left us the following portrait of this crusading son of Robert Guiscard:—"He was remarkably tall and handsome; his eyes were blue, his complexion florid, his demeanour haughty, his look fierce, and yet his smile was soft and insinuating; but he was crafty and deceitful, a despiser of laws and promises."

judgment, proceeded to the work of consolidating his new possessions. He distributed the land in fief to his chief officers, and in grants to the numerous monasteries which he re-edified or built. He fortified the towns and mouths of the rivers against the incursions of his piratical brethren; and, lately a robber himself, he now put down smaller peculators with such a vigorous hand, that we are told a bracelet which he suspended from an oak in a forest near the Seine, remained untouched there for three years. He adopted the language of the country, and the social and political institutions which he found already established. Chief amongst these was the feudal system, which was unknown to his Scandinavian countrymen, and which had originated with the Germanic branch of the Teutons. He established and developed it with a completeness which became another great cause of the success and military reputation of his people.

The feudal, a system of graduated authority accurately defined and arbitrarily enforced, which has been found so oppressive and mischievous in a more advanced state of society, was excellently adapted for the dismemberment and confusion which succeeded the downfall of the Roman empire. It was a perfect contrast to the Celtic system

of clanship, in which the elective privileges and the absence of individual restraint only produced anarchy in a primitive community. A nation is like the individual man, and cannot safely be freed from strong control until full grown and developed: in childhood, each requires restraint. The feudal system preserved order in some sort; it was a gloomy structure, to be sure, but still a structure: there was no bond of union, symmetry, or order in the clanship institution.

Under both systems, the temple of Christianity was the asylum of civilization from the barbaric violence of the age; and on the Continent as well as in Ireland the monks gave shelter to the spirit of better times, and strove to enkindle its strength and disseminate it anew. On feudalism they engrafted chivalry, and poetry nobly seconded the efforts of religion—for are not their missions the same, to exalt and spiritualise man? Chivalry, as offered to the rude feudal warrior by the monks and the poets, was a glorious ideal—haughtiness before his foeman, and humility before his God; sternness to the strong, and gentleness and protection to the weak and oppressed. It appealed to the nobler but dormant instincts of man's nature in a ferocious age, and it caught his fancy and admiration. The priest inculcated its human-

ising precepts at the installation of the youthful knight; and the jongleur accompanied the praises of its heroic disinterestedness and devotion with his tinkling harp. It was an ideal in glorious contrast to the savage passions of the period, and was but rarely adopted in practice. There were few such true chevaliers as Tancred and Godfrey of Bouillon; but there were a few such; and the unscrupulous knights and brutal barons who imitated nothing but their bravery, honoured in spite of themselves the moral virtues of those paragons. Thus, under the gloomy shade of feudalism, civilisation began once more to raise its head.

The Normans, busy in developing the feudal system, and remarkable for military and religious ardour, were naturally prominent in adopting chivalry; and this zeal and docility originated their peculiarly intimate relations with the church, which afterwards grew into an alliance mutually advantageous. The Normans furnished the flower of the armies of the Crusades—whether against the schismatics of Europe or the infidels of the East, Saracen, Greek, or a little later the Albigenses. On the other hand, the thunders of the church everywhere pioneered the advance of their expeditions, as in the invasions of Apulia, England, Wales, and Ireland. They were days

of lawless violence, from which the church did not escape. Against it the sword was unsheathed from within as well as from without, and its heads were naturally anxious to strengthen a people at once comparatively willing to recognize its rights, and powerful to defend them.

From all these causes—from their energy and their combination of the opposite qualities of contrasted races; from their development of feudalism, and its well disciplined social and martial organizations; and last and not least, from their intimate relations with the church, the Normans attained the position of the foremost military people of the middle ages. In France, in Italy, Sicily, and Greece, in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and in Asia—from De Burgo's Connaught principality to Bohemund's in Mesopotamia,—wherever their chargers planted hoof or their adventurers found an audience, they encountered no equals in battle or diplomacy.

The career of the Normans is a brilliant episode in the history of Europe, but it is likewise a brief one; for that very hybrid origin which contributed to their success was the cause also of their speedy national disappearance. Essentially and fundamentally a compound race, they had to thank that circumstance for a useful many-

sidedness of character: and they had to blame it, since it left them without any instinct of nationality to maintain them as a separate people. They conquered and colonised, they established laws and planted dynasties,—and lo! in the midst of their successes, and while the world is still wondering, they disappear as a nation, and for the simple reason, that they are not a genuine nation but only an artificial one. Their national existence was temporary because it was not natural and inherent, but had been only accidental. In the opening years of the thirteenth century, the king of France invaded Normandy. Much of its energy had been diverted over sea by the conquest of England, but its population was warlike, and its soil bristled with well fortified castles. The defence was gallant and vigorous, as a matter of course, but it was overcome; and with its overthrow, the spirit of resistance was at an end. Normandy, half French itself, had no restless and permanent objection to become a province of France—no inborn and inextinguishable hatred to be thus absorbed, as a pure race would have had to absorption by another different from itself.

## CHAPTER IV.

EXTERNAL CAUSES OF THE INVASION OF IRELAND, VIZ.: —KING HENRY'S AMBITION—FOREIGN EXPEDITIONS OF THE IRISH—POPE ADRIAN AND HIS POLICY.

In the year 1154, Henry Plantagenet of Anjou ascended the throne of England by right of his mother Matilda, daughter of Henry I., the youngest son of William the Conqueror. Matilda's first husband had been Henry V., emperor of Germany, and from this circumstance her son by Geoffrey Plantagenet was surnamed, in Norman parlance, Fitz-Empress. The family of Plantagenet,—the most martial line which ever ruled in England, which gave to its history so many paladins, to wit, the monarch we speak of, Richard Cœur de Lion, the first and third Edwards, and the Black Prince,—was of Celtic extraction, descended from a chieftain of Brittany known as Tortulf the Strong Hunter.*

Henry II. was a man of great genius and unusual accomplishments. To his uncle the Earl of Gloucester he was indebted not only for important help in securing his grandfather's sceptre,

* Michelet's History of France.

but also for an early mental cultivation, uncommon in his time except among churchmen. He was a prince of vast ambition and energy. The son of an empress, he aspired to rule an empire; and the territories that owned his sway on the day of his coronation in Westminster Abbey really constituted him the most potent prince in Western Europe. From his father he inherited Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; from his mother, Normandy and England. By his wife Eleanor he had obtained Poitou and Aquitaine, and he had claims of suzerainty over Scotland and Wales. Not content with so much dominion, he contemplated a more complete mastership of the last mentioned country; he prepared to assail the independence of his paternal kinsmen the Bretons; and he laid claim to the great county of Toulouse, which comprehended all the south east of France. Among the most prominent and important of his ambitious designs was the conquest of Ireland, which, torn by internal discord, and long isolated from the rest of Europe, and unacquainted with the military improvements of the time, he flattered himself could make but slender resistance to the puissant armies of the ruler of so much of Gaul and Britain. In the very year after Henry had assumed the English

crown, we find him taking the first step of preparation for the conquest of Ireland.

This western island, though, as we have said, isolated from the west of Europe, was of course not entirely so, but only comparatively. The Ostmen whom the Irish had permitted, after their submission, to remain in its seaports and harbours, carried on some commerce with the opposite coasts of Britain, of which the most frequented havens were then Bristol and Chester; and they still kept up a communication with their Scandinavian fatherland, though now for more peaceful purposes than of old. This limited commerce was principally in the hands of these Danish settlers, but the native Irish likewise occasionally crossed the sea in the more congenial occupation of soldiers. The kings of France, we are told, drew considerable bodies of them to serve in their wars; they much oftener traversed the narrow waters which roll between these shores and those of Wales as auxiliaries to the princes of that country; and we find that they were on several occasions induced to despatch forces to the assistance of the Saxon nobles and monarchs of England against the Normans, in whom all the natives of these islands —Scotch, Welsh, and Irish, as well as Saxons—

had the wit to perceive, even from the beginning, an enemy more than ordinarily dangerous.

We know that the Norman faction in England which had grown up under Edward the Confessor, was expelled from the kingdom by the interposition of Earl Godwin with an army of Flemings, and his son Harold with an army of Irish. After the battle of Hastings, Edmund, the son of Harold, came hither again, as his father had done before, and was similarly assisted.* With sixty-six ships, he crossed over to the English coast, and invested the city of Bristol. His Irish auxiliaries were not accustomed, however, to the assault or defence of fortified places, and speedily abandoning the siege, he led them to more congenial and successful operations in the open country. An extensive insurrection against the Norman power was soon kindled in the west of England by this irruption. Edmund and his Irish troops, joined by the Saxons of Somerset, Devon, and Dorsetshires, and the Britons of Cornwall, fought several sanguinary engagements with the formidable masters of the country before they were overthrown. The Irish, however, were too much occupied in domestic quarrels, and those expeditions abroad were too brief

* Wilhelm. Gemet., p. 290.

and infrequent to exercise any salutary influence on their military tactics. If such adventures had any permanent effect at all, it was only to excite the hostility of the Normans. Some of the Irish writers, indeed, expressly say that it was assistance afforded by their countrymen to the enemies of Henry in Wales, that first suggested to him the idea of invading Ireland.*

With respect to his scheme for this invasion, the first act of King Henry, now become a Norman potentate, was a characteristic stroke of Norman policy. It was to obtain the assistance of the Church, which had already stood the friend of his people in so many previous wars. Accordingly, in the year 1155, we find him sending his chaplain, John of Salisbury, on a mission to Rome for this purpose.

Adrian the Fourth at this time occupied the chair of St. Peter; he was by birth a Saxon Englishman, and his original name was Nicholas Breakspeare. A man of enterprise and ability, he had disdained the servile condition to which his countrymen were reduced by their conquerors; and while still a youth he had crossed the sea into France, from thence into Provence, and finally into Italy. In the last named country he

* Ann. MS. in Trin. Col., Dublin.

obtained employment in an abbey as secretary, and soon attracted the attention of his superiors. We find him in the course of time becoming abbot. By Eugenius the Third he was appointed bishop of Albano, and was sent as legate into Denmark and Norway; and at last, in 1154, he was raised to the Pontifical throne itself. The gracious reception which he accorded to the proposals of the king of England, is attributed by some writers to the circumstance of his having been an Englishman. But nothing can be more ridiculous than such an assertion. He was an Englishman indeed, but a native Saxon —one of the race whom their foreign rulers were oppressing with all the characteristic ferocity of the period. His ready acquiescence in the views of the Norman monarch, is one more proof that considerations of nationality cannot always be expected to be permitted influence with the rulers of a cosmopolitan church; or that the feelings or the duties of the man can be allowed by them to interfere with the duties or interests of the cleric. Adrian accorded to the prayer of Henry a bull conferring on him the kingdom of Ireland, and sent at the same time a ring in token of investiture of the new dominion. The following is the material portion of the bull:—

"We, therefore, with an accordant and benignant favor, commend thy pious and laudable desire, and with the like impressions we give to thy petition our grateful and willing consent, that, for the extending of the boundaries of the church, the restraining the prevalence of vice, the improvement of morals, the implanting of virtue, and the propagating of the Christian religion, thou enter that island, and pursue those things which shall tend to the honor of God and salvation of his people. And we strictly charge and require that all the people of that land shall, with all humbleness and honor, receive you as their liege lord and sovereign, andthat the rights of their churches shall remain pure and inviolate, and an annual tribute of one penny from each house shall be secure to Saint Peter and the Holy Roman Church. If thou, therefore, deem what thou hast projected in mind possible to be completed, study to instil good morals into that people, and act so that thou thyself and such persons as thou wilt judge competent, from their faith, words, and actions, be instrumental in advancing the honor of the Irish Church, propagate and promote religion and the faith of Christ, to advance thereby the honour of God and the salvation of souls, that thou mayest merit an everlasting reward of happiness hereafter, and establish on earth a name of glory which shall last for ages to come."

This bull was granted in 1156. Adrian added to the pretexts for it furnished by others, his own

knowledge of the natives of Hibernia gleaned while he was in Norway as legate. He had found them to be "wild and furious; likely, very shortly, unless God found remedy, to deface religion, making no more of necessary points of doctrine than served their loose humour."* Now, the only Irish that Adrian could have met in Norway must have been such occasional mariners as had gone thither in the ships of the Scandinavian traders. He, most probably, had his information from the Ostmen who came from Erin, who, disappointed and humiliated, reduced to the position of tributaries in the island they had hoped to hold as masters, were not very likely to speak in amiable terms of the stubborn natives. There is no doubt but that the Irish were found, in the year 1111, to differ in some points of ceremonial and discipline from the Catholic church; and it is very possible that in their long and sanguinary wars with the Danes, and afterwards with each other, their morals and manners may have been somewhat disordered. But whatever were the shortcomings or faults in religion or conduct of the Irish people, we have historical evidence that they were amenable to instruction; and that long before the events of

* Campion's Chronicle.

which we write, they had acquiesced in the wishes and precepts of the Holy See with a docility which seems in singular contrast to Adrian's conclusions respecting them, and to the representations of Henry. In 1111, the Irish bishops, to show their orthodoxy, had gone through a regular form of submission to Rome ; and in 1152, Cardinal Paparon had been sent as legate to Ireland, where he held the great council of Kells. No less than three thousand of the Irish clergy gathered at his summons. He arranged the ecclesiastical affairs of the country; each archbishop received the pallium from his hands, and the princes and national estates exonerated the clergy in future from temporal laws and taxations. Every thing which the Popes considered their peculiar privilege was, it would appear, now conceded, with one exception. Several of the great families of the island continued to retain the practice, hereditary with them, of the presentationto bishoprics—that is, they nominated the bishop, who then awaited the approval of the Pontiff.*

If the docility and obedience of which the Irish have just given proof, cannot avert the catastrophe of the consignment of their nation to

* On these points, see O'Halloran and our other historians.

the tender mercies of the conquerors of England, surely the pure and disinterested zeal of their forefathers in propagating the Christian faith, may be expected to weigh for something against the by no means disinterested zeal of the Normans for the authority of the church. So you and I, reader, would suppose; but so did not think Adrian and his successor, Alexander the Second, who confirmed his bull. Those were the days of the Anti-popes, as well as of Arnaldo of Brescia and his "political heresy," which demanded the removal of the temporal power of the clergy; and these pontiffs seem to have thought it judicious to extend and strengthen, by all means within their reach, the dominion of the champions who most firmly upheld their authority.

Having thus obtained a grant of the island of Erin from Pope Adrian, Henry II. was unable immediately to act upon it. He was already so busily involved in schemes and wars of aggrandisement, that several years elapsed before circumstances permitted him leisure for the enterprise. First, he had a struggle with his brother Geoffrey for his paternal county of Anjou; then the obstinacy of the Bretons, the Poitevins, and the Welsh, in resisting his arms, occupied much

time. King Louis of France, jealous of the enormous growth of the Norman power, next gave him trouble. Finally, there intervened his extraordinary contest with Thomas á Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, the son of a Saxon by a romantic marriage with a Saracen lady;* a man who, unlike his countryman Nicholas Breakspeare, found means to reconcile his duty to his oppressed fatherland with his duties as a churchman, and who expiated his patriotism with his blood on the very steps of the altar. While these events were occupying the king of England beyond sea, others were ripening in Ireland to facilitate his coming invasion, by procuring for it the invitation and assistance of some of the natives themselves.

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* Thierry's Norman Conquest.

## CHAPTER V.

DOMESTIC CAUSES OF THE INVASION OF IRELAND, VIZ.: FEUD BETWEEN THE HOUSE OF O'CONOR AND THE KING OF LEINSTER—THE ABDUCTION OF DERVORGHIL—DIARMAID'S FLIGHT OVER SEA, AND NEGOTIATION WITH THE KING OF ENGLAND.

Of the five kingdoms into which ancient Ireland was divided, the great family of Hy-Niall ruled in two, viz. Ulster and Meath; the O'Nialls, or the northern branch, in the former; and the O'Melachlins, or southern branch, in the latter territory. These clans derived their descent from the famous "Niall of the Nine Hostages," who in the old pagan days of Ireland was one of the leaders of the expeditions known to, and dreaded even by, the Romans, as the incursions of the Picts and Scots, and who had pushed his enterprises into Gaul. The "fair-surfaced kingdom of Leinster," comprehending only the southern portion of the modern province, had for monarchs the family of Mac Murrogh. The powerful sept of the O'Conors ruled Connaught, rising boldly on her mountains behind a wide frontier of black marshes. Munster, always the prolific

region of bards, was divided into the rival principalities of Thomond, or North, and Desmond, or South Munster; the Mac Carthies being the potentates of the latter country, and of the former the O'Briens, who assumed the name from their great chieftain Brien Boroimhe, the conqueror of the Danes. The original arrangement between the two Munster royal families was the alternate rule of their kingdom; but mutual jealousy generally rendered this impossible, and prevented either assuming the importance to which the king of the united province would naturally be entitled. The limits of Meath and Leinster were too circumscribed to enable them on ordinary occasions to compete for the supremacy. And, under these circumstances, the balance of power usually inclined to the compacter or more extensive kingdoms of Ulster and Connaught, whose rulers might reasonably calculate on having between them the chances of the dignity of Ard-Righ, or chief-king of the island, unless when some prince of more than usual energy or ability happened to arise in the weaker states. At the period of which we write, the post of Ard-Righ was long a subject of bloody contention between Turlogh O'Conor, king of Connaught, and Murtogh O'Niall, king of Ul-

ster. The Connaught prince at last grasped the sceptre; but his victory over his rival was not so complete as to enable him to lay aside apprehension of a repetition of the dispute.

In the year 1152, there occurred an incident which many of the historians of Ireland have set down to be the actual cause of the Anglo-Norman invasion, and which had certainly a collateral influence in bringing about the event. The story of this occurrence is variously related, but the following would appear to be the best authenticated narrative of the case. The king of Meath had a daughter of extreme beauty,* who was wedded to Tiernan O'Ruarc, prince of the mountainous district of Breffni, of which the modern county of Leitrim comprised the main portion. An old attachment existed between this lady and Diarmaid Mac Murrogh, king of Leinster, a chieftain who in his troubled time and country seems to have been more than ordinarily remarkable for turbulence and cruelty. The attachment did not cease after the marriage of the Lady Dervorghil. Mac Murrogh pursued her with letters and messages, to receive which she was nothing loth; but it was not until the wanton dame had attained her forty-fourth year,

* Regan.

and her lover his sixty-second, that this correspondence produced any result.* Then taking advantage of an expedition of the Ard-Righ against O'Ruarc, in which he participated, Mac Murrogh carried off Dervorghil by her own assignation, in her husband's absence. The prince of Breffni was only a potentate of second-rate power, and was unable singly to avenge the injury of the king of Leinster. He made his complaint to the Ard-Righ, who had only just despoiled his territory, and demanded redress against Mac Murrogh. Turlogh O'Conor was by no means sorry for a pretext to direct his arms against Diarmaid, who had been the warm partizan of the claims of his rival O'Niall in the struggle for the supreme monarchy. Accompanied by O'Ruarc, he entered Leinster, and ravaged it with fire and sword. Mac Murrogh, in his hour of necessity, received but lukewarm support from his vassal nobles, to whom he had ever been a cruel tyrant; and Dervorghil, after residing for a year in Leinster, was brought back in triumph by O'Conor, and was restored, not to her husband, with whom she appears to have

* Dr. O'Donovan's note in his translation of the Four Masters.

never lived on good terms, but to her father, the king of Meath.

The humiliation of Mac Murrogh and the recovery of Dervorghil did not, however, staunch the mortal feud which now existed between the king of Leinster and his antagonists. The Ard-Righ Turlogh died in 1156, and his old rival Murtogh O'Niall then assuming the authority for which he had before struggled unsuccessfully, Diarmaid hastened to pay court at the elevation of his friend. But, after some years, the Ard-Righ Murtogh having, in defiance of a solemn treaty, seized the prince of Uladh (corresponding with the present county of Down) in furtherance of an old grudge, had his eyes put out, which atrocity so exasperated and alarmed some neighbouring chieftains, that they confederated, and entered his patrimonial territory, where the battle of Litterluin was the consequence, in which Murtogh was killed.

Ruari* O'Conor, the son of Turlogh, now grasped the crown of Erin, left vacant by the death of Murtogh O'Niall, and proceeded at once to establish his dignity. O'Niall's kingdom of Ulster submitted at his approach; and then, joined by Tiernan O'Ruarc, he undertook the

* Anglicized Roderick.

complete overthrow of Mac Murrogh, a man so peculiarly obnoxious to his house, and to its ally the prince of Breffni. The principal chieftains of Leinster, detesting their ferocious king, who had, it is said, executed seventeen of their number in a single year, ardently espoused the side of his assailants. Conspicuous among them were Mac Gill-Phadraig the prince of Ossory, and the Ostmen of Dublin, which latter Ruari took into his pay. The invaders over-ran the country; and Diarmaid, who, on the first symptom of invasion, had burned down his capital of Ferns, and betaken himself to the woods, was formally deposed, and another of his family substituted for him as king of Leinster. Thus successful, Ruari next marched into Munster, and having asserted his authority in that part of the island also, he retraced his steps northwards, and convened a grand meeting of the nobles and clergy from all parts of the island, in which there was now no overt disavowal of his rule.

Meanwhile the unlucky Diarmaid, a fugitive in the forests, found that nothing was to be expected from his former subjects, justly estranged. One of these, a chief of the O'Byrnes, despite the intercession of two monks, sternly refused him an audience, and encountering him in a wood on

a hill-side, bade him begone from his neighbourhood if he wished to preserve his life. Diarmaid now determined to go over sea, and seek foreign aid. He accordingly went on shipboard with a train of sixty followers, and passed over into England, where he was received at Bristol and cordially entertained, as the annals of that city say, by a Norman baron of the neighbourhood, Fitz-Harding, lord of Berkeley.*

Finding, however, that the English king was then busy in France, he continued his journey thither, and at last got an audience of Henry II. in Aquitaine.† The Anglo-Norman monarch was not forgetful of his ambitious designs on Ireland, and here was additional opportunity for their realisation presenting itself. Though his hands were fully occupied at the time, he received the Irish fugitive most graciously, and in return for Mac Murrogh's oath of allegiance and vassalage, he gave him letters patent for that aid from his subjects which he could not for a little longer bestow himself. The following is the purport of these letters, as the historians have transmitted it to us:—

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* Regan; and Sayer's History of Bristol, chap. 9.

† Cambrensis.

"Henry, King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, unto all his liegemen, English, Normans, Welsh, and Scots, and all other nations under his authority, sendeth greeting. As soon as the present letters shall reach your hands, know ye that we have received Diarmaid, prince of Leinster, into our protection, grace, and favour. Wherefore, whosoever within our dominions will aid and help him, our liege and trusty subject, in the recovery of his rights, let such persons be assured for that purpose of our full license and favour."

Cambrensis, the Norman narrator of the history of the invasion, has left us the following brief portrait of the King of Leinster, whose name has become infamous in the Irish annals, as the usher, by his introduction of the foreigner, of ages of calamity not yet ended for his unhappy country. He tells us he was a man very tall of stature, and of large and powerful frame, loud and hoarse voiced, a valiant and bold warrior in his nation; one who desired rather to be feared than to be loved; a persecutor of his nobles, but, as is often the case with men of despotic disposition, much more lenient to those further removed from him in rank. Unlike the majority of his countrymen, he was harsh and disagreeable to strangers.

Of the ultimate fate of the Lady Dervorghil it may not be uninteresting to the reader to here take note. After her restoration to her father's family by the Ard-Righ Turlogh, she appears to have devoted herself entirely to religious exercises, in expiation of a crime which involved such fatal results. At the great synod held at Mellifont in the year 1157, we find her bestowing sixty ounces of gold upon the abbey of that name, with a golden chalice for the high altar, and sacred vestments and other offerings for each of the nine other altars of the church; and here she died in religious seclusion in the year 1193.*

## CHAPTER VI.

KING DIARMAID'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE NORMAN LORDS—HIS RETURN TO IRELAND AND PROCEEDINGS THERE.

HAVING received much comfort and courtesy from the politic Henry, Diarmaid Mac Murrogh turned his back on Aquitaine in high spirits, and recrossed the sea to England, where, by daily

* Annals of Ulster.

journeys in the tedious fashion of the time, he arrived once more in the "noble city of Bristol." Here he resolved to make a stay, attracted by the situation of the town opposite the Irish coast, and by the number of ships and boats which daily resorted to its wharves from the ports of his native country. During his sojourn, he had the letters which Henry had given him read each day in the public places, and a proclamation of liberal pay and reward to whoever would afford him assistance in the recovery of his kingdom.* For some time these exertions had no success, until the tidings of the requirements and tempting promises of the fugitive prince reached the Norman adventurers planted in Wales, who had been contending with the native Cambrians for the possession of the less mountainous portion of their territory, since the time of William Rufus. Among the chief of those men was Richard De Clare, earl of Strigul or Chepstow in the Welsh marches, and who likewise inherited in South Wales the earldom of Pembroke, which had been granted to Gilbert De Clare by Henry I. Richard, like his father Gilbert, was popularly known by the surname of Strongbow, from his great skill in archery. The Normans settled in

* Cambrensis.

Wales had all the dissolute habits of soldiers of fortune, and Richard Strongbow's circumstances were at this time such as to render any adventure desirable which held out the hope of gain. He appears, moreover, to have stood but badly in the good graces of his monarch,* and this ill feeling on the part of king Henry may possibly have predisposed him towards this expedition, which offered the chance of comparative or entire independence of the king's control. A meeting was soon arranged between him and the exiled prince of Leinster, and they speedily came to an understanding. Though of broken fortune, Strongbow was a man of high rank, great military reputation, and large influence; and in return for his proposal of an expedition which should recover the crown of Leinster, Mac Murrogh promised him the hand of his daughter Eva, and succession to his royalty; although the laws of Ireland expressly forbade the departure of the crown from the members of the hereditary royal family.

Diarmaid, who had probably selected Bristol as his place of sojourn, that he might keep up a communication with his friends in Ireland, now resolved to return thither, satisfied in the expectation of the foreign aid which he had

* Stanihurst.

sought. The passage of the narrow sea between England and Erin was then always a matter of uncertainty, and often of extraordinary difficulty and fatigue; and to make as much of the journey as possible by land, he took his way into Wales; for from St. David's Head in Pembrokeshire of a clear morning you may discern the more elevated portion of the Irish coast; and Cambrensis tells us that from that point it was then only a fair day's sailing across. Perhaps another motive for directing his course through Wales, was the hope of stumbling on other auxiliaries among the restless Normans who were living there by their swords. On reaching St. David's, he was hospitably received by King Henry's feudatory, Rhys Ap Gryffyd, the native prince of South Wales, and by his cousin the Norman bishop of the district, both of whom we are told exhibited great compassion for the wanderer;* which friendly feeling was probably increased by the munificent tenders of Mac Murrogh to all who should serve his need. The bishop of St. David's and his brother Maurice Fitz-Gerald, a warlike captain in those parts, were the sons of Gerald, governor of Pembroke and lord of Carew, a member of an illustrious Italian family, the

* Cambrensis.

Gherardini of Florence, which had settled in Normandy, and which had come to England with high rank in the army of William the Conqueror.* Their mother was the lady Nesta, daughter of Rhys Ap Tudor, or Ap Gryffyd, for he is called by both names, (the grandfather of the Rhys now before us) who was prince of South Wales at the invasion of the followers of William Rufus. Nesta, in an age of easy morality, was as remarkable for her levity as for her beauty. She became the mistress of Henry I. of England, and on separation from him she married Gerald, by whom she had the two sons we have mentioned. She was carried away from the governor of Pembroke by a Welsh chieftain Caradoc; and on her husband's death she became mistress of the constable Stephen De Marisco, by whom she had a son, who, under the name of Robert Fitz-Stephen, is likewise about to figure in the invasion of Ireland. This Robert was Henry the Second's constable of the castle of Abertefie, or Cardigan. He was betrayed by his own men into the hands of the Welsh prince, Rhys the younger, his cousin, with whom he had been three years in captivity at the period

* See the Rev. Mr. Meehan's translation, in "the Library of Ireland," of O'Daly's History of the Geraldines.

of which we write. The Welshman was projecting an insurrection against the authority of the king of England, and he offered freedom to his prisoner if he would unite with him in the attempt. The Norman blood of Fitz-Stephen revolted, however, at the idea of joining his Welsh kinsman against his paternal nation; and circumstances now occurred which procured his liberation on more agreeable terms.* The bishop of St. David's proposed to Diarmaid Mac Murrogh, that his brother Maurice Fitz-Gerald and his half brother Robert Fitz-Stephen should take service with him at the head of a body of troops in the next spring, and while Strongbow was preparing his larger armament. The Leinster prince, in return for this offer, promised to give the two knights the town of Wexford and two cantreds of land in its neighbourhood. Rhys Ap Gryffyd, whose share in the transaction seems to have been the most disinterested, immediately liberated his prisoner, to enable him to prepare for the expedition.†

The Norman historian of the invasion leaves us a portrait of Robert Fitz-Stephen. He tells us his life had been one of vicissitudes. In person he was of the middle height, but large and

* Cambrensis. † Ibid.

full bodied; of a countenance very comely; bountiful, liberal, and pleasant in disposition and manner, but "somewhat above modesty addicted to wine and women." In this painting by a friend we have an insight into the hardy, restless, reckless, dissolute character of these freebooters who gathered to the banner of Mac Murrogh, free to give and free to take—the portrait of the soldier of fortune in every age.

At last, by the middle of August of this year 1168, the ships were prepared which were to bear the fugitive chieftain back to Ireland;* and the wind coming round to a favourable point, he embarked at St. David's Head with an excess of impatience† which we find it difficult to understand, unless on the supposition, which subsequent events render likely, that he was in the receipt of encouraging reports from his partizans at home. Having obtained the promise of his new auxiliaries to be with him without fail in the spring, wind and weather permitting, Diarmaid set sail, and "after a merry passage" arrived in the creek of Glascargé, in the modern county of Wexford, and within his patrimonial territory; and thence proceeded privately to find

* Regan. † Cambrensis.

shelter in the abbey of Augustinian canons near Ferns, which he had himself founded.*

Cambrensis tells us that Mac Murrogh remained in this retirement all the winter, and until the arrival of Fitz-Stephen; but we may take the Irish chroniclers as better authorities in this particular period of his career. From their narrative we perceive that many of his friends and clansmen, soon after his arrival, gathered to his standard; and that some Welsh bands crossed the sea thus early to his assistance, among whom was a youth, styled in the annals of the Four Masters, son of the king of Britain, and who was probably the son of the Welsh prince Rhys Ap Gryffyd, Mac Murrogh's very good friend. The king of Leinster seems to have recovered his hereditary patrimony of Hy-Kinselah, comprising the southern districts of his kingdom, without opposition. But the news soon reached the Ard-Righ Ruari, who, collecting the forces of Connaught, and summoning the prince of Breffni to his aid, set

* Ware. The chronicle attributed to Maurice Regan says that Mac Murrogh was accompanied by a Norman knight, Richard Fitz-Gondobert, but that this adventurer was so slenderly attended, and was therefore of so little assistance, that after a short stay in Ireland he was licensed to depart.

out at once to put down the returned fugitive. Diarmaid advanced to his frontiers, and encountered his assailants at Cil-Osnadh, now Kellistown, in the modern county of Carlow. Some skirmishing took place between the rival forces. In the second encounter of this kind, twenty-five of Mac Murrogh's followers were killed, and among them was the young Welsh captain aforesaid, whose valour the Irish historians eulogize with a cordiality which we find them often exhibiting to a stranger, even though an enemy. Mac Murrogh, seeing himself unable to cope with his too powerful opponents, drew off into the woods, and sent messengers to tender his submission, and effect an accommodation. O'Conor relented, now that his enemy was in his power; and believing him utterly broken, he took seven hostages, and permitted Diarmaid to retain ten cantreds of his land, or probably the territory he was already in possession of. To Tiernan O'Ruarc, as his *eineach* or fine for the wrong he had done him, Mac Murrogh paid a hundred ounces of gold.*

Having thus cheaply got rid of his enemies when they had him on the brink of destruction, King Diarmaid, whose desire for vengeance was by no means lessened by the Ard-Righ's misplaced

* Annals of the Four Masters.

clemency, returned to Ferns, and immediately despatched his secretary O'Regan, or, as the English call him, Maurice Regan, to hasten the arrival of Fitz-Stephen.

## CHAPTER VII.

LANDING OF FITZ-STEPHEN AND PRENDERGAST—THE ASSAULT OF WEXFORD.

It was in the month of May in the year 1169, that the fatal shadow of the English invader first fell upon Ireland. The sun was shining brightly on the leafy land and tranquil sea, and the birds were singing pleasantly in the trees; and who that beheld that morning those three barks threading their way among the rocks and shallows which skirt the south-eastern shore of the island, would believe that they were freighted with so much misfortune for the ancient race of the Gael? Fitz-Stephen guided his vessels round the rocky headland, and into the shallow sandy inlet of Cuan-an-bhainb, which received its appellation of Baganbun, as some suppose from the names of two of his galleys.* Here the Norman chieftain effected his landing with thirty knights

* Bonna and Boenne.

of his kindred or near connexion; for he was a man of family and influence, and also of estate, before he lost it by his own excesses or other misfortune. Besides these knights, he had sixty squires on horseback, and three hundred archers on foot, armed with crossbows, chosen for their skill and valour throughout all Wales possessed by the Normans.* These footmen were probably Flemings from the colony in Pembrokeshire, Welshmen, and Saxon-Englishmen. The cavalry were Normans, and among them were knights of high rank and repute, to wit, Meyler Fitz-Henry, David and Robert De Barry, Myles Fitz-David, son of the bishop we have mentioned, and Hervey De Montmarisco, the uncle of Strongbow, and who came over as his agent to take charge of his interests, and procure him information about the nature of the country; but whom the chronicler describes as a man unfortunate and impoverished, and "without arms and furniture."† How Fitz-Stephen transported the ninety barbed chargers necessary for those mailed knights and men at arms, and with which they took the field in a day or two after, none of the historians tell us. The small horses of the country would be hardly suitable for the purpose, and it

* See Cambrensis, Hibernia Expugnata, cap. 8, lib. 1.

† Idem.

is most likely that the fleet was not limited to the three large vessels of which mention is made. In reference to the place where this landing was effected, there was this distich long after popular among the Palesmen:—

> "In the creek of Baganbun
> Ireland was lost and won."*

The assertion was not quite correct, however, for we need not repeat that it took four hundred years to effect the work of which the beginning was here made.

On the following morning, two more vessels hove in sight, and disembarked at the same place ten knights and a large number of archers. This force was under the command of a Welsh knight, Maurice of Pendergast or Prendergast, a stout and hardy soldier.† Fitz-Stephen, uneasy in an unknown country, where his coming had been expected, had immediately despatched messengers to Mac Murrogh, apprising him of the landing. Diarmaid, who seems to have been fully prepared, received the tidings with great joy, and at once sent off to the Norman camp his illegiti-

* Stanihurst.

† The particulars of the landing of the Normans, and of the siege of Wexford, are chiefly derived from the narrative of Cambrensis.

mate son Donal, "a valiant gentleman," with a body of five hundred spearmen; and then, with very little delay, followed himself with a large force of horse and foot.* Having solemnly renewed their covenant, Diarmaid and his foreign auxiliaries directed their course towards the town of Wexford, which was distant about twenty-three English miles.

This place, which was in importance the second town in Leinster, was, as is apparent from its Teutonic appellation, a settlement of the Danes, who still composed its inhabitants. The name is indicative of its situation—*Waesfiord* signifying a bay overflowed by the tide, but left nearly dry at low water. The Irish called it Loch-Garman. Like the other colonies of the Ostmen, it was tributary to the Irish kings; but Wexford had revolted against Diarmaid with the rest of his dominions, and had not yet returned to allegiance. Its population of bold and sturdy traders, at the approach of the foe, sallied forth from their walls to the number of 2,000 men, to give battle. But they encountered an army as numerous as their own,† and they were struck with surprise

* Stanihurst.

† Diarmaid's army must have been as numerous. Fitz-Stephen had brought 400 men, and Prendergast's two ships

at the presence in King Diarmaid's array of the formidable Norman cavalry, with their conical helmets, angular shields, complete suits of mail, and lances twelve feet long; caracolling on large horses barbed with steel. The seamen and merchants of Wexford had often seen those warriors in their voyages over sea, and were well aware that they could not resist their onset in the open field. Prudently retiring, therefore, they burned the neighbouring villages and suburbs, and destroyed all the provisions they could not remove, and then, closing their gates, prepared for defence. Fitz-Stephen advanced, and so disposed his crossbowmen as to shoot down with their arbalests all who might show themselves on the walls and turrets; then filling the ditches with his men-at-arms, they planted the scaling ladders, and gave the assault with loud shouts and great resolution. Robert De Barry, a young knight anxious for distinction, led the escalade; but the townsmen flung down large stones and beams of timber, and beat them back, killing eighteen and hurting many. Barry was struck on the helmet by a stone, and fell headlong into the ditch, out

full of archers could not have mustered less than half that number; then there were Donal's 500 spears, and, finally, the "large force" with which Diarmaid himself had joined his allies.

of which he was with difficulty pulled by his followers.* Only three of the townsmen were killed in this assault.†

Enraged at their repulse, the Normans fell back on the sea shore, and burned all the ships they could find in the harbour, without caring to what nation they belonged. One bark out of England, laden with corn and wine, slipped her anchor in time to escape their fury, and hoisting sail stood out to sea. A party of the more youthful and impetuous freebooters jumped into a boat, and rowed after in pursuit. Failing to overtake her, and following too far, they were nearly unable to get back, and were only saved by their companions who went out to their assistance.

Next morning, having first heard divine service in the camp, Fitz-Stephen prepared with more circumspection for a new assault. Meanwhile, however, a change was taking place in the determination of the Wexford men. The bishop of the locality and another ecclesiastic were actively urging the besieged to return to their allegiance to Diarmaid, and pointing out

* Sixteen years afterwards, says Cambrensis, all his teeth fell out from the effects of this blow, and new ones grew in their place!

† Regan.

the hopelessness of resistance. Their advice was at last adopted, and they came forth to the camp of the besiegers as ambassadors for the townsmen. An arrangement was soon effected, Wexford was surrendered, and four of the chief citizens were given to Mac Murrogh as hostages for fidelity. The king of Leinster immediately redeemed his promise to Fitz-Stephen, and Fitz-Gerald not yet arrived, by making over to them the town and the adjacent territory, an arrangement which was hardly foreseen by the inhabitants when tendering their submission. They were now placed in a very different position from their former one; for, unlike the Irish, the Normans and their Flemish, Welsh, and Saxon followers had no objection to dwelling in walled towns, as the Wexford and other Hiberno-Ostmen soon found to their cost. At the same time that he made this gift, Mac Murrogh bestowed in fee on Hervey De Montmarisco two cantreds of land on the coast between Wexford and Waterford, corresponding to the modern baronies of Forth and Bargy. He evidently thought it his interest to keep in good humour the uncle and agent of the powerful Strongbow, on whom his hopes of vengeance and ambition mainly depended.

Leaving Wexford, Diarmaid led his army to

his palace at Ferns, where he remained for three weeks, attending to the wounded and feasting his new auxiliaries.

## CHAPTER VIII.

KING DIARMAID WITH THE NORMANS MAKES WAR ON HIS FORMER VASSALS, THE PRINCES OF OSSORY, OFFALY, AND IMALE.

DIARMAID MAC MURROGH compelled a body of the Ostmen of Wexford, now reduced to obedience, to take service in his ranks, and thus swelled his army to 3,000 men, irrespective of the forces of Fitz-Stephen and Prendergast,* whose number we must set down at 600 at least. He resolved to direct his next attack against his revolted tributary, the Prince of Ossory, the most ardent of his enemies. The enmity between the king of Leinster and Donal Mac Gill-Phadraig originated, the annalists tell us, in the discovery by the latter of an intrigue between Mac Murrogh's son Enna and Donal's wife.† He

* Cambrensis.

† This Enna was ancestor of the family of O'Kinsellagh, and some say of that of Mac Kenna also.

made a close prisoner of the young prince, and had his eyes put out, but the lady contrived to elope with her paramour nevertheless; and Mac Gill-Phadraig, from the same cause as O'Ruarc, became the mortal enemy of the house of Mac Murrogh.*

The prince of Ossory was a skilful and resolute warrior, who appears to have at once comprehended the formidable assailants with whom he had now to deal, and to have adopted the description of warfare best calculated to baffle them. The Irish were essentially light troops, extraordinarily nimble of body, and without any defensive armour beyond a small target, or mantle wrapped round the left arm. Their kerns were equipped each with a couple of darts, or a small bow and arrows, and when these missiles failed them, they could betake themselves to the sling, says Cambrensis, "with great detriment

* The name of the powerful sept which once ruled in Ossory has been Normanised into Fitz-Patrick. The name Gilla-Phadraig signifies "the servant of Saint Patrick," and was derived from the religious devotion of an ancestor who founded no less than seventy churches in Ossory. Such names were very common among the Irish. Thus we have Gill-De, the servant of God; Gill-Chreest, the servant of Christ; Gill-Breedh (now corrupted into Kilbride), the servant of Saint Bridget, &c.

to their enemies;" they likewise carried in their girdles a *scian*, or scimitar. Another portion of their soldiery, the galloglasses, bore short lances and two-handed swords for cutting only, or a light battle-axe with a broad blade excellently well steeled, and which they wielded with one hand with so much skill and force, as to lop off at a stroke the limb of a foeman.* But of what avail were the short lances and feeble bows and unarmed bodies of the impetuous Gael in the open field, against the twelve-foot spears and terrible crossbows and coats of mail of the Norman conquerors of England and Wales; or how could the small horses of the country, so small, though very swift and spirited, resist the rush of the Flemish war-chargers? The wild and irregular nature of the country was favourable, no doubt, to a desultory method of fighting; but for this, the foreign auxiliaries of the king of Leinster had not come unprepared. They were not merely chevaliers accustomed to ride tilt on the open plains of Normandy and England, but knights, men-at-arms, and archers brought up and

* See Ware and Cambrensis. The term galloglas signifies "foreign soldier," derived from the foreign equipment of this branch of the Irish infantry, whose chief weapon, the battle-axe, was adopted from the Danes.

trained in the wars with the Welsh mountaineers; and in a region as difficult with natural obstacles as Erin. Years after, Cambrensis advises King John to send to fight in Ireland, against the naked, unarmed natives, light of foot and nimble of body, only men with light and easy armour, and accustomed to partizan fighting, like those who made the first successes in the island.*

The king of Leinster and his Norman auxiliaries set out on their expedition against Ossory. This country, comprehending the southern part of the present Queen's County and part of Kilkenny, was a region of fastnesses; for though the surface was generally level, it was mantled over with thick forests interspersed with broad tracts of bog. The prince of this territory had collected about 5,000 men† of the Mac Gill-Phadraigs, and their tributary and allied clans of O'Carrol, O'Delany, O'Doncha, O'Niachol, and many another sept whose name has been since distorted from the original, through degeneracy of national feeling, or by the exigencies of the English speech or early laws which made it penal to retain the native appellation.

In those warriors, says the Norman historian

* Hibernia Expugnata, lib. ii. cap. 40. † Regan.

the invaders encountered "no dastards, but valiant men who stood well to the defence of their country, and manfully resisted their enemies."* The prince of Ossory had fortified in his own way a pass through which his assailants should march, by cutting across it deep trenches with ditches and palisades, and by "plashing," or flooding, the ground approaching it. Diarmaid attacked this position vigorously; the fight lasted from morning till night; and after an obstinate resistance it was at last forced by the skill of the foreigners, with much slaughter on both sides.† The invaders then advanced, making a road as they went along, and, by their own account, murdering and spoiling the inhabitants and wasting the country.‡ After penetrating some distance in this fashion, King Diarmaid and Fitz-Stephen appear to have had enough of an enterprise where their antagonists remained strictly on the defensive, confined themselves to their fastnesses, and there obstinately disputed every inch of the ground. A retreat was resolved upon; and preliminary to it Mac Murrogh summoned a council of the Norman captains, at which he warned them of the difficulty of a particular point on the line of march homeward,

* Cambrensis. † Maurice Regan. ‡ Cambrensis.

which they had determined to take.* Having accordingly arranged with all due precaution, the army set out on its return. As they defiled through the open glades of the woods, the June sun fell in broad golden patches through the boughs on their long and curiously diversified array. King Diarmaid's native troops, which had set out 3,000 strong, but were now reduced to 1,700, marched first—bands of light horsemen and irregular infantry, with long flowing hair and beards, bright yellow tunics reaching mid-thigh, and shaggy mantles depending from the shoulder, or wrapped, by way of shield, round the left arm.† A troop of forty-three picked men formed their vanguard, led by Donal, the king of Leinster's illegitimate son, sometimes styled "the handsome," but more generally surnamed Kavanagh, from Kilcavan near Gorey, the place where he was fostered.‡ He was a leader of great enterprise and daring, and appears to have been always selected by his father for any particularly perilous or important undertaking. After the loose ranks and rapid movements of the Leinster soldiery, came the steady march of the Normans,

* Regan. † See Walker on Irish Dress.

‡ He was the ancestor of the powerful family of Kavanagh who inherited the kingdom of Leinster.

glittering in coats of mail; their large horses and the discipline of their footmen in contrast to the array of their allies. The king of Leinster rode with the Norman battalion, not choosing to trust himself with the Wexford men, or even with his own clansmen of Hy-Kinselah.

The equanimity of this line of march did not long continue undisturbed. On reaching the dangerous pass indicated by Mac Murrogh, the war shout of the Mac Gill-Phadraigs, *Gear-laidir a-boo!* rang around them in the woods,* and Donal Kavanagh, who had entered the pass, was quickly driven back under shelter of the first battalion. This was at once attacked; and after three hours' fighting the Leinster men began to give way, but were rallied again by their leader. Meanwhile the Norman horse and foot had got entangled in boggy ground, where the Ossory men pressed them furiously. Maurice De Prendergast was foremost in encouraging his troops, and ordered a retreat; which he effected, though continually charged by the Irish, until hard ground was recovered, where the heavy cavalry could act. The Irish boldly followed them into the open field, but Prendergast and Fitz-Stephen, having now rallied their knights and men-at-arms, fell

* *Gear laidir*—sharp and strong.

upon them with irresistible force, and killed great numbers. The archers and galloglasses followed up this success, and gave no quarter; the latter cutting off the heads of the fallen. Two hundred and thirty heads, or three hundred by another account, were laid at the feet of Diarmaid Mac Murrogh, of whom Cambrensis, whether truly or not, relates this horrible story; that, having recognised one of the heads as that of an especially bitter enemy, he caught it up by the hair, and in a paroxysm of fury tore the face with his teeth.*

The invaders made no further delay in Ossory, but marched immediately to Leighlen, within Mac Murrogh's patrimonial territory, where they encamped that night, and next day returned to Ferns, bringing their wounded along with them.

This first expedition against Ossory seems to

* Cambrensis and Regan. The former writer is very brief in his description of this expedition. After eulogising the valour of the Ossory men, he describes only one engagement, and then tells us that Mac Gill-Phadraig sued for peace. On the other hand, the chronicle in Norman French, attributed to the dictation of Maurice Regan, King Diarmaid's secretary, enters into details, and is more particular and careful in the narrative, and says nothing of the prince of Ossory suing for peace, or of any truce whatever after the two expeditions. Subsequent events plainly corroborate the account of Regan, and I have therefore given it the preference.

have had no other result than abundant hard knocks, great slaughter on both sides, and disappointment to Diarmaid and his Norman friends, for Mac Gill-Phadraig obstinately refused to come in and make his submission, notwithstanding the example of several more timid neighbouring chieftains.* Mac Faelain, the lord of Offaly, the northern district of modern Kildare and King's County, likewise declined to return to his allegiance to the king of Leinster. Diarmaid, enraged, now undertook to punish this other refractory vassal, and he accordingly entered Offaly with fire and sword, his son Donal again leading the vanguard. Mac Faelain avoided battle in the open field, and the invaders, having preyed the country, returned with the spoil to Ferns.†

After a short rest of eight days, the confederates made a predatory excursion against the O'Tuathals, who were esteemed to be in rank the second family in Leinster, and whose sway extended over a considerable portion of the plains

* Regan.

† The Whelans and Phelans, now so numerous in Leinster and Munster, are descended from these Mac Faelans, and from the O'Faelans of the Decies in the County of Waterford, another and distinct clan.

and mountains now known as Kildare and Wicklow. Mac Murrogh penetrated their ruggy territory of Imale in the direction of Glendalough; but, as in Offaly, after having ravaged and burned the country, he returned without meeting with resistance, or, perhaps, caring to go too diligently in search of it.*

King Diarmaid, after those arduous enterprises, now refreshed himself and his Norman friends for a while in his palace and camp at Ferns; and then, not to let valuable time go by, prepared for one more campaign against the redoubtable prince of Ossory. Donal Kavanagh, with five hundred men, constituted the van, the Ostmen of Wexford were the main body, and Mac Murrogh and the Normans formed the rear. The first night he encamped in the country of a chieftain whom the annalist calls Mac Burton; and we have an illustration of the unfriendly relations still subsisting between him and his subjects, in the fact that he would not permit the Wexford men to lodge in the same camp with him, but compelled them to make one apart for themselves. He mistrusted them, and feared treason, we are told; and it is likely enough that his troops had no great inclination for this second

* Regan.

expedition against the obstinate clans of Ossory. We now find the supernatural added to the other horrors of the expedition. The narratives of both Cambrensis and Maurice Regan inform us that on this night of their encampment, which was near the ruins of an ancient fortress, an extraordinary and terrible apparition startled and terrified the whole army. There was a shouting and hurrying of warriors, and a clashing of arms as if a great host was breaking in upon them; and this fearful clamour was distinctly heard in the two camps. The first alarmed by it was a certain Norman, Randulf Fitz-Ralph, captain of the watch, who, rushing to give the alarm, was in the tumult mistaken for an enemy, and knocked on the head-piece and nearly killed. The only knights of the Normans, says Cambrensis, who kept their ground and were not intimidated, were Robert De Barry and Meyler. Those warriors, who flinched from no living enemy, with all the superstition of the times trembled at the idea of a hosting from the land of spirits. We may reasonably conclude, however, that the gloomy woods and savage galloglasses of Ossory were already beginning to interfere with the midnight repose of King Diarmaid's motley army, when every sylvan noise was

magnified into the war-cry of the Mac Gill-Phadraig.*

The following night the army was at Athlether, which may be Athy, on the great river Barrow; and next morning they passed the river, and resumed their march through the enemy's country, but saw no foeman all that day. The prince of Ossory was waiting for them, however, and, with his usual tactics, had selected a difficult part of the road at which to make a stand. Maurice Regan's narrative calls the place by the unintelligible name of Hatchdritt, and it is not unlikely that it may have been somewhere south of Mountrath. As before, this pass was trenched and pallisaded, and manned by stout kerns and galloglasses. The Ostmen of Wexford were appointed to make the attack. They went to their task gallantly, but were driven back. For three days, we are informed, they persevered in their assaults, but without success; and Diarmaid was compelled to bring up the Normans, before the bolts from whose arbalests no pointed bonnet, or glibh, or coolun, could show itself above the stockade without being transfixed. With their

* The grass in the vicinity of the encampment was found all trampled next morning, so it is likely the alarm had been occasioned by herds of wild hogs or other animals.

scaling ladders, and shields and haubergeons protecting them from the stones and arrows and crashing axes, they at last got over the entrenchments; and once on equal ground, the pass was, of course, forced. The Ossory men scattered into the woods, and their prince fled into the neighbouring country of Ormond. No further resistance is said to have been offered; and the king of Leinster, with his auxiliaries, returned in triumph to Ferns.* This second expedition into Ossory seems to have been attended with no more permanent results than the former one. Donal Mac Gill-Phadraig presently returns to his country, recovers his authority, and re-appears on the stage as the enemy of Mac Murrogh.

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## CHAPTER IX.

THE ARD-RIGH MARCHES AGAINST LEINSTER—MAC MURROGH'S QUARREL WITH PRENDERGAST—LANDING OF FITZ-GERALD—O'CONOR FOILED BY O'BRIEN AND FITZSTEPHEN—MAC MURROGH'S EXPEDITION AGAINST DUBLIN—HIS AMBITION—HE WRITES TO STRONGBOW.

THE reader will naturally ask what was the

* Regan.

Ard-Righ about, while his refractory vassal was overstepping in this rude fashion the bounds he had so recently assigned him. When the *easchlaghs*, or light-footed couriers, reached the royal home in Connaught — now, alas! no longer "Croghan of heroes"—with tidings that Mac Murrogh had imported warriors from beyond sea, shining in mail, and under the hooves of whose horses the galloglasses of the Gael went down like grass, Ruari, or, as the English called him, Roderick O'Conor, thought it time to bestir himself; and, having first summoned a council, he gathered a large army with the assistance of O'Melachlin of Meath, and O'Ruarc of Breffni, the father and husband of Dervorghil, and therefore the personal foes of Mac Murrogh. Leaving "the Wonderful Castle" of Tuam, where he dwelt, an embattled stone edifice, which was so called from its being the first structure of the kind erected by the Irish, O'Conor set out on his march, but one more formidable enemy now arose to embarrass his movements. This was Donal Mhor O'Brien, prince of Thomond, or North Munster, and chief of the warlike tribe of Dal-Cas, the most reputed for prowess in the island, and which was always allowed, as a right in battle, the post of danger, viz. the van in the

attack, and the rear in a retreat. This prince was son-in-law of Mac Murrogh, and now warmly espoused his cause. Dismayed by the approach of the Ard-Righ and his numerous gathering, King Diarmaid and Fitz-Stephen formed a camp in a place strong with hills, bogs, and woods, near Ferns; and having fortified it so as to render it impregnable, they retired thither with their forces.* The clansmen of Connaught and Meath, and the Dublin Danes who accompanied them, could scarcely force such a position; the fierce O'Briens and their confederate septs were up in arms on his flank, and Ruari had not dash, energy, or wisdom to deal with the difficulty. He tried negociation, and sent to both Mac Murrogh and Fitz-Stephen separately, to endeavour to detach them from each other, but without avail.† Foiled in this, he dispersed his bands to lay waste the country; when the clergy of Leinster, with whom, according to all the historians, Mac Murrogh had always remained on good terms, and who, besides, desired to stay the horrors of war, appeared before the Ard-Righ, and besought him to agree to an accommodation. O'Conor a second time allowed the opportunity of crushing his enemy to pass, and a treaty was

* Cambrensis. † Ibid.

soon ratified on both sides. Mac Murrogh acknowledged his suzerain, and gave him his son Conchovar, heir apparent of Leinster, as a hostage, and by a secret clause promised to send away the Normans. On the other hand, the Ard-Righ agreed that Diarmaid should be restored in full to the kingdom of Leinster, and promised his daughter, after the fulfilment of the treaty, to his hostage, the young Conchovar.* Having finished his business, as he thought, with Mac Murrogh and the Normans, O'Conor turned his steps against his enemies in Munster. The policy of Ruari throughout this transaction was shallow and feeble in the extreme; but we must nevertheless, in justice to him, recollect that the true nature of this first aggression of the Norman conquerors of England was not properly regarded or appreciated among the contending chieftains in this island. Even the annalists, as Dr. Leland justly observes, speak with careless indifference of the first invasion of the English, and devote much more space and attention in their records to the mutual conflicts of their own tribes and provinces. For example, the Annals of the Four Masters, among the events of the year 1169, sum up in the following few words

* Cambrensis, and Annals of the Four Masters.

the circumstances of which we have just been speaking; "Ruari, with O'Ruarc and the king of Meath, and the foreigners of Ath-Cliath (Dublin), went into Leinster to meet the men of Munster, Leinster, and Ossory, and they set nothing by the Flemings; and Diarmaid gave his son as a hostage to Ruari."

It is not to be supposed that everything was love and harmony in their camp, between the fierce and impatient Mac Murrogh and his rapacious and freebooting auxiliaries. We can easily understand differences arising between such men; and whether it was after the return from the last Ossory expedition, or during the invasion of Leinster by O'Conor (for we have no precise date in the matter), these differences came to such a head, that Maurice of Prendergast, a Welsh knight trained in the Norman discipline, who had greatly distinguished himself since the landing, and who ranked among the strangers next in importance to Fitz-Stephen, determined to withdraw from the king of Leinster. Accordingly, accompanied by 200 soldiers, he set out for Wexford to take shipping back to Wales.* Diarmaid sent orders to the men of Wexford to prevent his departure. The townsmen detested

* Maurice Regan.

their lord, but they dared not disobey him in this matter, no more than in the graver one of taking service in his army; for their hostages were in his hands, and their families and merchandize within reach of his anger. They could not openly frustrate his desire to detain Prendergast, but they accomplished it privately, by advising that captain to tender his services to Mac Murrogh's enemy, the prince of Ossory. The proposal was mutually agreeable, and Prendergast set out for the country of Ossory. He was waylaid on his road by the ever active Donal Kavanagh, but he effected a passage, and joined Mac-Gill-Phadraig in safety; and their first and indeed only combined operation against the king of Leinster was an incursion for plunder into Hy-Kinselah. The other Normans remained faithful to Diarmaid. From the narrative given by Regan, Prendergast seems to have prudently avoided committing himself against his fellow adventurers, from whom he had just separated. After some time spent together, in which nothing appears to have been accomplished beyond the harrying of their neighbours, the O'Mores of Leix, the Ossory men and their foreign auxiliaries began to grow heartily tired of each other. His pay was considerably in arrear, and Prender-

gast plainly saw that nothing was to be gained, cut off from communication with his friends at home, and was anxious to get back to his own country. The Ossory men were unwilling to let him leave, to become their enemy again; though willing enough, according to Regan, to get rid of him in a fouler way; but their chieftain would not hearken to any treacherous suggestion, though anxious himself to detain the strangers. Prendergast set out for Kilkenny, but the Mac Gill-Phadraigs barred his march from that town to the port of Waterford. The crafty Welshman had recourse to stratagem, and feigning ignorance of the circumstance, offered to renew his term of service. Then learning that the Irish, taking him at his word, had left the road open, he started at midnight from Kilkenny, (not without infinite trouble and address, the chronicler tells us—one of his men having killed a citizen in a brawl) and arrived by a swift march at Waterford, "where he found means to embark for Wales."

Meanwhile, Maurice Fitz-Gerald had arrived to the assistance of Mac Murrogh with two ships, having on board ten knights, thirty men-at-arms, and about one hundred archers and footmen.* Diarmaid now resolved to break the treaty, as

* Cambrensis.

there was opportunity for doing so, and accordingly set out to attack the Ostmen of Dublin with his whole army, except Fitz-Stephen, who stayed behind to build a castle at the Carrig, a rocky hill near Wexford, in the cantred Mac Murrogh had granted him. The country about Dublin is laid waste, and the citizens beg peace and give presents and hostages. We are next told that the king of Leinster employs Fitz-Stephen and his Normans in assisting O'Brien to repulse O'Conor;* but we have no particulars of the expedition.

Seeing himself thus successful and the Ard-Righ foiled in both negociation and battle, Mac Murrogh's ambition and hopes enlarge, and he consults the Norman captains on the chance of their procuring further assistance from England for his designs of conquest. He believes Strongbow has forgotten him, and he repeats the offer he had once made to that lord, of his daughter and reversion of his kingdom, to Fitz-Stephen or Fitz-Gerald, if they can bring over a force to conquer the island. Their power is not great enough to accomplish this, and they are both already married, and they are compelled to refuse the invitation. Thereupon he determines to revert once more to negociation with Strongbow. He writes

* Cambrensis.

to him accordingly, and tells him, in the figurative language of his country—that the storks and swallows, those birds which are here in spring, and depart at the approach of winter, have come and are gone again, and yet that he has not arrived, though the breezes were easterly, and therefore favourable for his sails ; but now to come, and show that he has not forgotten his promise. He tells him that they have already recovered Leinster, and that he hopes, with his help, to conquer all the island. Strongbow takes advice of his friends, and, being assured of Fitz-Stephen's success, of which he had been doubtful, he now determines to bend his whole force to the enterprise. As a preliminary step, he prays King Henry's permission for the undertaking; or otherwise, to restore him the possessions of which he had deprived him. The king would not decide, but gave him fair words. These sufficed, however, for the adventurer's purpose. He returned home, and passed the winter in preparation.*

* Cambrensis.

## CHAPTER X.

LANDING AND VICTORY OF RAYMOND LE GROS.—LANDING OF STRONGBOW AND CAPTURE OF WATERFORD.—MARRIAGE OF STRONGBOW AND THE PRINCESS EVA.

THE port where the invaders are next about to show themselves has a situation so specially favorable, near the estuary of three large rivers, that the heathen Irish and the heathen Danes each dedicated it to their chief deity—the former bestowing on it the name of Cuan-an-Grian, or the haven of the sun, and the latter that of Vader-fiord or Wadterford, the haven of Odin the Father. Afterwards, the Irish and their fellow Celts of Wales called and still call it Port Lairge, either after Largs, a certain Danish chief, or from the resemblance there of the shape of the river Suir to the human thigh. It was a city in the earliest times, as we see by Ptolemy; long indeed before Scandinavian Sitric and his colony planted themselves in it in the ninth century, and likewise peopled the neighbouring peninsula, thenceforth known as Gall-tyr, the territory of the foreigners. It became one of the most important settlements of the Danes in the island,

and its citizens wrought, coined money, still in the twelfth century occasionally pirated, and always carried on a brisk commerce. Their Irish neighbours were not, to be sure, a trading people. Their wants were simple, and these their swords and the labour of their serfs supplied. There were times, however, when they thirsted for a draught of foreign wine, or fancied novel gear for war or woodcraft; and then the clansmen of the Decies—O'Bries or O'Mearas, rode down from the hills in the vicinity; and O'Doyles and O'Bolgers came boating down the forest-shaded Nore, and over the broad Barrow; and O'Hickeys and O'Conrans between the picturesque banks of the Suir; and their wooden cots and leathern corachs and mountain ponies brought hides, wool, honey, and falcons to the wharves and market of Waterford; for which merchandise the bustling Ostmen found ready sale at Bristol, Chester, and other ports in strange lands. On such occasions, you would encounter those visitors in the narrow streets, lithe, light-limbed, garrulous, and gesticulating; gazing with dislike and contempt, as well as wonder, at the closely packed houses and sober avocations of the thicker-formed, staider mannered, staider featured Ostmen.

The winter being over, Strongbow sends before him into Ireland a gentleman of his own household and family, Raymond, surnamed Le Gros, the son of William Fitz-Gerald, the elder brother of Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Robert Fitz-Stephen. Raymond set sail in the calends of May, with ten knights and seventy archers, well appointed; and, steering due west, disembarked at Dundonolf, at the entrance of the estuary of the Barrow. There Raymond entrenched his scanty band with ditches and palisades of turf and wattles.* The citizens of Waterford, and the neighbouring Irish led by O'Faelan, prince of the Decies, and O'Ryan of Idrone, as soon as they heard of the landing of this band of foreigners, collected in considerable numbers, estimated by their enemies at 3,000 men, and getting into boats rowed down the Suir, and disembarking, marched against the Norman entrenchments.† Raymond had plundered the neighbourhood, and got together a large quantity of cattle, and he now drove them out on the loose bands that were approaching. The latter were thrown into confusion by the wild rush of the beasts, and the Normans following behind, charged them in disorder and obtained an easy victory.‡ Among the

* Cambrensis. † Ibid. ‡ Maurice Regan.

Normans there was a certain knight smitten with leprosy, that terrible disease then so prevalent in Europe; and the chronicler tells us that this gentleman, by name William Ferand, weary of life and anxious for death, particularly distinguished himself in this encounter, in which he found the fate he sought.* Great numbers of the Irish and Ostmen were killed, and some prisoners were taken, whom Raymond recommended should be spared and held to ransom; but his advice was counteracted by the crafty and cruel Hervey De Montmaresco, who dissuaded the adventurers from encumbering themselves with prisoners, and urged on them the necessity of striking terror by their execution. Hervey's advice was more in keeping with the barbarous spirit of the times, and was adopted. The captives were brought down to the rocks, where their limbs were broken to prevent their swimming ashore, and they were then cast headlong into the sea. Unlike Cambrensis, Maurice Regan does not exonerate Raymond Le Gros from participation in this butchery, which he says was expressly occasioned by that captain's grief for the loss of his dear friend De Bevin, killed in the battle.

* Cambrensis.

Raymond appears to have passed the summer in his entrenchments, awaiting the arrival of his lord. Strongbow, meanwhile, having got every thing ready for the expedition, set out through Wales, picking up all the choice men he could find along his road; among others, Maurice De Prendergast and his band just returned from Ireland,* and embarking at Milford Haven in the month of August of this year 1170, he sailed up the Suir on the vigil of St. Bartholomew,† with two hundred knights and a thousand soldiers, according to one English account, or sixteen hundred, according to another. Such an army, so accoutred and disciplined, might reasonably calculate on great successes in Erin, and divers prophecies of the ancient Welsh sages and wizards were circulated amongst the soldiers, so many of whom were Welshmen, to encourage them; as, for example, this one of Merlin's:— "A great forerunner of a greater follower shall come, and he shall tread down the heads of Desmond and Leinster, and the ways before opened he shall enlarge."‡

On the next day, the feast of St. Bartholomew, Raymond with great joy abandoned the entrenchments where he had remained shut up so long,

* Regan. † Cambrensis. ‡ Ibid.

and joined the army with forty knights. And to him, "a valiant man, and expert in all military matters," was committed the charge of the assault, which was arranged for this very day both by land and water. The banners were displayed, and they marched in good array to the escalade; but the garrison, composed of the citizens, under their chief magistrates Reginald and Smorth,* and some Irish, vigorously defended themselves, and repulsed two attacks. What followed will afford us some insight into the imperfect nature of the fortifications of the town, one of the most important possessed by the Danes in Ireland. Raymond, looking about him for the best point at which to renew the attack, espies a little wooden house outside and built into the town wall, and resting half upon posts. He brings his men together, and encourages them to give a fresh assault here. They hew down the posts, and the house falls, bringing with it part of the town wall. The Normans enter at the breach thus made, and kill the people in the streets without pity, leaving them lying in great heaps.† In Reginald's Tower they seize that chief, and O'Faelan, prince of the Decies. These men

* Regan. † Cambrensis.

Strongbow was about to put to death,* but they were saved by the intervention of Mac Murrogh, who, accompanied by Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald arrived, after the storming of the city.

And now the massacre and the sack have been fully accomplished, and the king of Leinster hastens to solemnize the nuptials of his daughter with his puissant ally. The piles of ghastly corses are removed out of the way, and the pools of blood are dried up, that they may not defile the feet of the bridal procession, which winds through the dark and narrow streets, with crash of Norman clarion and Irish barabu, and the festive tinkling of the crotal, and the inspiring strains of the harpers.† Up the long aisles of the old cathedral moves that picturesque array of bearded Gael and close-shaven Normans. The chroniclers have left us no description of the bride, the Princess Aoiffe, or Eva; but we may well believe that she was fair, for she came of a comely race. There stood her father, Mac Murrogh, towering above the tallest of the strangers and of his own people by his lofty stature and majestic frame—

* Stanihurst.

† The clarseach was the Irish harp, the barabu a trumpet, and the crotal a kind of hand-bell, which gave a soft melodious accompaniment to other music.

a king every inch, with all his black, merciless, and ambitious heart. And there too was her half brother, the gallant Donal Kavanagh, "the handsome." It is easy to conceive with what a mixture of terror and curiosity the bride must have looked, to see now for the first time what fashion of man was this chief of the iron-clad strangers, on whom her father was bestowing her—this slayer of her countrymen, dangerous ally of her family, and usurper of her brother's rights. But whatever might have been the effect of his fame, Strongbow's was not the presence to inspire dislike or terror. Richard De Clare, says Cambrensis, was somewhat of a sanguine complexion and freckled, his eyes grey, his face feminine, his voice gentle, and his neck little; but rather of high stature. Very liberal and courteous; what he could not win by force, he would accomplish by good words and speeches. In peace he was more ready to yield than dictate, and out of camp he was more like a soldier companion than a commander: but in the field he carried with him the state and countenance of a valiant captain. In battle he was a most assured standard and rallying point to the whole company. Such is the description by a friend of this redoubtable chieftain, and in the main features

we may assume it to be correct. But his intended execution of the chiefs of the garrison of the town, without any urgent necessity for the act, is a proof that the chivalric bearing here described was a thing of the surface, and that in the matter of humanity, at least, he was not a whit superior to his companions.

Amongst the train of hardy knights who crowded behind the Norman leader that day in the cathedral of Waterford, there were many who became the progenitors of families which have ages since been identified with our Gaelic population—"more Irish than the Irish themselves." A personal description of a few of these men will not be uninteresting to their descendants, and we find such interspersed through the minute work of Gerald De Barry.

There stood Raymond that day, the ablest captain of all the invaders, the founder of the families of Grace and Fitz-Maurice,—middle sized, high nosed, merry faced, his hair yellow and curling; but, though young, fat and corpulent, from whence his surname Le Gros. Very active he was, nevertheless, as well as careful and valiant.

There smiled Hervey, Strongbow's uncle, veiling his ferocious and crafty spirit under a bland aspect; tall and comely, long-armed and eloquent.

And there scowled swarthy Meyler Fitz-Henry, with the blood of the royal Conqueror in his veins, for his father was the illegitimate son of King Henry the First by the Princess Nesta. Sharp featured was this knight, black eyed, grim of look, low of stature, but broad shouldered, lean-flanked, and sinewy—"a stout and valiant gentleman." Then there was Maurice Fitz-Gerald, modest of countenance, moderate and compact in figure, one rather of deeds than words—"a man not altogether without fault, and yet not spotted with any notorious crime." There too were little Raymond Fitz-Hugh; and Robert De Barry the younger, and Raymond De Canton or Condon—"both tall and handsome and worthy men."

The nuptials having been solemnized with royal magnificence,* and Strongbow having been saluted Righ-Damhna or heir to the crown of Leinster, the confederates turned their backs on the mourning and rifled homes of Waterford, duly leaving a garrison there, and set out for Ferns to prepare for an expedition against Dublin.†

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* Stanihurst. † Regan.

## CHAPTER XI.

MAC MURROGH AND THE NORMANS SURPRISE DUBLIN—THEY FORAY MEATH AND BREFFNI—ALARM OF THE IRISH CLERGY—INTESTINE STRIFE—JEALOUSY AND PROCLAMATION OF KING HENRY.

DIARMAID'S mortal hatred to the Ostmen of Dublin, on whom he now felt strong enough to pour out the full measure of his vengeance, originated in this wise. His father, Murchard, tyrannical and exacting, had excited the citizens to revolt, and transfer their allegiance to Godred, king of Man; but they afterwards found it convenient to be reconciled with their hereditary monarch, though still cherishing resentment in their hearts. On a certain state occasion they solicited, with all becoming loyalty of manner, the presence of the king of Leinster, to obtain his sanction to regulations they were making for their internal government. On this occasion, while sitting cheerfully with the elders and chiefs of the city, enjoying himself in his chair, and "reporting some pleasant history," the king's weapon was stolen away, and the rest of the company fell upon him and murdered him; and afterwards,

to add insult to their crime, buried his body with that of a dog.* The Normans were not prevented from embarking in Mac Murrogh's design of vengeance on Dublin, by the recollection that a few years before (in 1165), the Ostmen of that city had furnished their king Henry with a considerable body of auxiliaries for one of his Welsh wars, in which they had suffered much.†

The confederates made but a short stay at Ferns, when they put their army in motion. It was the largest they had yet assembled, and was formidable in numbers as well as equipment and discipline. Myles De Cogan and 700 Normans, with Donal Kavanagh and his light-armed Irish, formed the vanguard; the king of Leinster and 1,000 of his men, with Raymond Le Gros and 800 Normans, came next; behind advanced Strongbow with 3,000 Normans, and the march was closed by another body of Irish.‡ We are not told how the Norman force was so suddenly augmented to these formidable numbers; but they may have been drawn from the colony, which was now planting in the cantreds of land granted to Hervey by King Diarmaid on the

* Camden, Stanihurst, and Hanmer's Chronicle.

† Annals of Dublin. ‡ Regan.

shore between Wexford and Waterford, and which was composed of Flemings from the district in Pembrokeshire known as Little England, where they had been established in the time of Henry I.*

The Ard-Righ Ruari meanwhile having been joined by O'Ruarc and O'Carrol, prince of Uriel,† had collected a numerous force, and they entrenched and flooded the passes through the bogs and forests of the plain country, over which they anticipated that the invaders would march to Dublin. Mac Murrogh, having been duly informed of these preparations, held a council with De Clare, and they determined to avoid the plains where the Irish were so strongly posted, and to attempt in preference the way of the mountains, through O'Tuathal's difficult country of Imale;

* The descendants of those Flemings occupy the baronies of Forth and Bargy, and constitute a distinct people to the present day, peculiar in manners, appearance, and, until a quarter of a century ago, in language. Dr. O'Donovan, in a note to his translation of the Four Masters, bears witness, from personal observation, to the dissimilarity between these people and the inhabitants of the northern baronies of the county of Wexford. "The Kavanaghs and Murphys are tall and often meagre, while the Flemings, Codds, and other families of Forth and Bargy are generally short and stout."

† Uriel comprehended Louth and Monaghan.

no easy undertaking for men and horses in armour. They executed, however, their march through the mountains, by Glendalough,* and descended into the fields and forests south of the Liffey, where De Cogan and the vanguard only halted close under the town wall of Dublin, Mac Murrogh and Strongbow encamping some distance behind.† The king of Leinster despatches his secretary Maurice Regan, to demand the immediate surrender of the town; and the citizens, scared no doubt by the fate of Waterford, send out their archbishop, Lorcan O'Tuathal, and others, to arrange about conditions; but while the negociation is pending, Myles De Cogan and Raymond Le Gros surprise the town wall, and treacherously enter the city by escalade, slaughtering the inhabitants on all sides, as in Waterford.‡ Asculf, the viking of the Ostmen, and a great number of his townsmen get away to the strand and into their ships, carrying with them some of their jewels and other valuables, and sail for the settlements of their kinsmen in the islands of Scotland.§ The Norman and Leinster soldiery get good spoil, for the town is

* Regan and Cambrensis.

† Regan. Their lines extended from Carnaclough, now Dolphin's Barn, to Kilmainham.

‡ Cambrensis and Stanihurst. § Cambrensis.

rich.* On the same day, the king and his son-in-law enter, and find a great quantity of victuals for their army.

If the confederates had failed to take the city on the instant, their position might have been perilous, for the Irish host was in battle-array on their flank. The latter now believed that the Dublin men had deserted their cause and surrendered the city, and that they were justly punished for their conduct by the treachery of the Normans on gaining possession of the town.† The loosely banded forces of O'Conor, now a second time disappointed, break up and disperse to their respective countries.

Having set everything in order in Dublin, where Myles De Cogan was appointed governor, Strongbow and Mac Murrogh proceeded to lay waste Meath and Breffni with fire and sword; among other atrocities, burning the churches. The inhabitants of East Meath submitted to the invaders, for which Tiernan O'Ruarc of Breffni

* Regan.

† Four Masters. Cambrensis and Regan confess the treachery of their friends by their eagerness to exclude the heads of the army from participation in it. They attribute the surprise exclusively to the youthful impatience of Cogan and Raymond.

revenged himself by putting their hostages to death. A second expedition, commanded by the king of Leinster, was soon after made against this chieftain's country, but with different success; for he defeated their forayers, and then attacked and broke their camp, driving from his territory their mixed array of Normans, Leinster, Meath, and Uriel men.* About the same time, the Norman garrison of Waterford was defeated on a predatory excursion by Cormac, one of the Mac Carthies, and his men of Desmond.†

The winter had now set in, and in a damp and marshy country like Ireland further operations in the open field were impossible. The Ard-Righ Ruari, who seems to have had a weakness for negociation, takes advantage of the lull in hostilities, to remind the king of Leinster that his son's life is in his hands as hostage for his conduct. Mac Murrogh carelessly replies that he will persevere in the same line of behaviour, and that he means to conquer Connaught and all

* The Uriel men were with Roderick a little before, and a little further on we find them again in his army, though now with Mac Murrogh and the Normans. The facility with which sides were changed in this contest, is one more proof that the Irish did not yet regard it in the light of a national struggle.

† Four Masters.

Ireland. O'Conor, enraged at this reply, orders all the Leinster hostages to be put to death, viz. the young prince Concovar, a son of Donal Kavanagh, and the son of his foster-brother, O'Callaighe.*

The progress of the Normans, their rapid capture of the Ostmen's strongholds, and their military skill and ferocity, appear to have had a great effect on the Irish clergy, of whom we find a council was now convoked at Armagh, to consider how they might best avert this scourge, and appease what seemed to be the wrath of heaven. They believed this invasion to be a judgment on them for their nation retaining in bondage numbers of English, either purchased from their own people by merchants, or carried off by pirates;† for the Ostmen still retained a spice of their old leaven, and many of the native Irish clans, like the O'Driscolls of the south and the O'Malleys of the west, loved the water and practised there the license of rovers.

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* Four Masters, and Cambrensis. There is a curious fresco of the fourteenth century at Knockmoy abbey, in the county of Galway, representing a youth tied to a tree, and kerns shooting him to death with arrows; which is supposed to represent the death of Mac Murrogh's son.

† Cambrensis and Campion's Chronicle.

The importation of slaves was once customary on the Continent as well as here. It was the sight of some Angle or Saxon-English children in the slave-market of Rome, which directed the attention of Saint Gregory to the conversion of their nation. Struck by the ingenuous aspect of those children, with their fair complexions and open countenances, he is said to have exclaimed that "they would have been angels, not Angles, if they had been Christians."* That fullness and softness of form and fairness of complexion characteristic of the Saxon race, and which were not elegant or so appropriate in the men, imparted its cherub-like character to infantine beauty, and were also charming in the women, who were renowned for loveliness as their daughters are to-day. A considerable proportion of the English captives brought for sale to Ireland were females. These Saxon girls had not the expressive faces and the vivacity of the Irish maidens, which conquer the fancy. Theirs were the attractions which are most potent over the senses. They had fine figures, regular features, bright blue eyes, long and thick fair hair, and that sedateness and tranquillity in face, speech, and deportment which have the voluptuousness of repose, and which had

* "Non Angli, sed angeli forent, si essent Christiani."

the powerful charm of contrast and novelty for the fiery, impulsive creaghadoirs and hunters of Erin. The clergy sought to correct this levity of the chiefs and nobles, which it seemed to them had now brought punishment from heaven, and it was accordingly solemnly decreed in this council at Armagh, that the English slaves throughout the island should be forthwith set free and sent away.

It would not, however, seem that the Irish laity were as yet much impressed by the fame of the Norman invaders, or alive to the necessity for checking their progress. We must certainly conclude so, if we are to judge from the continued prevalence of their suicidal civil strife. Our annals are nowhere more replete with such records than at this very period. Every tribe seems to have been at war with its neighbour. In this year and the following one, we find, for example, that Conor O'Nial, son of the late Ard-Righ Murtogh, was killed in public at Armagh, on Easter Sunday, by his vassal Hugh Beg Mac Cana and his men.* The men of Uladh, (county of Down) forayed the country of the Kinel-Owen. and they were attacked by the latter, and twenty-one chiefs and a vast number of their followers

* Cod. Clarend., tom. 49.

were killed. The men of Iar-Connaught forayed Thomond; and the tribes of Hy-Maine, in the county of Galway, ravaged Ormond, and in the succeeding year repeated no less than seven predatory excursions over the Shannon, "between Palm Sunday and Low Sunday"—brisk work when we recollect that those are the Sundays before and after Easter. The Mac Gill-Phadraigs of Ossory killed three hundred of the people of Ely. O'Ruarc of Breffni ravaged Gaillenga and Eaithne; the chief of Clan-Iffernain was killed by the O'Seaghnessy; the chief of Fortuatha in Wicklow was killed by the chief of the Hy-Fineachlais; the lord of Hy-Meith was slain in an island of Lough Neagh by the men of a fleet from the Orkneys; and Mac Carthy of Desmond attacked and defeated the Danes of Limerick, and burned their market place and half their fortress.* We have here a catalogue of domestic strife quite sufficient, the reader will agree, to indicate the weak and broken condition of the Irish nation at this period, and to explain why the Normans, at their first coming, were not more resolutely resisted and attacked. The reduction at last of the fierce O'Brien of Thomond, to the Ard-Righ's authority, which took place about this same time,

* Four Masters.

is the only useful item of civil war which we find in the category.

The tidings of Strongbow's progress did not diminish in importance by their carriage to England, where King Henry was led to believe that his adventurous subjects were on the eve of overrunning the whole island. He was always suspicious of the earl of Pembroke, and made no doubt that he was now about to set up as an independent potentate. This would completely spoil his own long-cherished ambitious designs on Ireland. He, accordingly, issued an edict forbidding all intercourse and traffic with the island, and interdicting his subjects, on pain of death, from visiting its shores. At the same time, he ordered his subjects already there to return home before the approaching Easter. Strongbow sees his position to be a perilous one, thus cut off from all supplies and communication with home. He assembles a council of his fellow adventurers, and it is resolved to send Raymond Le Gros to assure the king of their fidelity. This ambassador finds Henry in Aquitaine, and tenders to him, from Strongbow, the gift of all his acquisitions in Ireland, with an humble expression of his loyalty and submission. The jealous monarch is still however, dissatisfied and distrustful, and postpones for the present any definite reply.

## CHAPTER XII.

DEATH OF KING DIARMAID MAC MURROGH—ASCULF MAC TORCAL ATTACKS THE NORMANS IN DUBLIN.

In the month of May, of this year (1171), the mainspring of all this trouble we have been witnessing, Diarmaid Mac Murrogh, king of Leinster, dies in his palace at Ferns, exactly two years after the first English landing, and in the very midst of those ambitious plottings and dark schemes of revenge, to effect which he disinherited his family and betrayed his country. He was eighty-one years of age at his death, and up to the last was busy with his designs of evil. 'Tis only a few short months since we have seen him accelerating, by a defiant message, the death of that son whom he had given into the hands of his enemy, as a pledge for conditions he did not mean to observe, and whose inheritance he had made away with to purchase foreign assistance for his own ends.* There is no blacker character in history than this Mac Murrogh. His thirst for vengeance, which, more than ambition,

* We see by the Four Masters that Conchovar was heir-apparent to the crown of Leinster.

impelled him to retain the Normans, would appear by all accounts, on small occasions as well as great, to have been something fiendish and beyond precedent even in a ferocious age. He was a tyrannical prince, an unnatural parent, and a traitor to his nation. The memory of Diarmaid "na-gall," or, of the foreigners, has been held in deserved execration by his countrymen to the present day.

After the King of Leinster's death, the majority of his followers, who had beheld with ill-restrained abhorrence his bestowal of the heirship of his power on a foreigner, fell away from the Normans, and choosing another Mac Murrogh for their prince, made war upon them. Donal Kavanagh, a chief of the O'Byrnes, and a few others continued in the alliance with Strongbow.*

It was on a June morning of this year (1171), about the season of Whitsuntide, that the Norman warders, pacing the walls of Dublin city and looking eastward, might have discerned a multitude of sails on the horizon—an unusual spectacle to them just now, for King Henry's edict had cut off the communication of the adventurers with England, and the town itself had not recovered its trading activity since the sack

* Regan.

of the previous autumn. The town and the prospects of the bold freebooters who had seized it, must indeed have been cheerless enough at this moment. South of the walls stretched away little else than lonely forests, now waving in their summer beauty, to the base and into the frequent clefts of the blue mountains beyond. Away north from the river's bank lay the fertile fields of the Ostman district of Fingal,* lately populous but now nearly desolate too, and showing the blackened homes of many a burnt-out Plonkenet (Plunket), Swedeman (Sweetman), Dowdal, and other Danish magnates; for the district had been at least three times ravaged within the year, the last time by Cogan and his garrison, when he had extended his foray even to Duleek.† The city was cheerless enough now, and the garrison seemed likely to be so ere long, for it was known that the Irish princes were confederating, and King Henry beyond sea was frowning angrily on his adventurous subjects.

When that warder on the town wall, or the other one on the summit of the fortress, removed a few years later by King John to make room for the more regular Norman structure of Dublin

* Fion-gall, *i.e.* the country of the fair-haired strangers.

† Four Masters.

Castle—when this mail-clad soldier, pacing his narrow round in the sunshine, or leaning musingly on his pike or cross-bow, turned from gazing seaward or towards the forests and fields, he beheld the whole city at his feet, with its houses of wood or plastered clay, and the people in the narrow streets passing to and fro, or trading at the open stalls; and the hum of their movements and voices rose to his ear as they haggled and bargained in the Norse speech, or in the Gaelic, or in the corrupt mixture of the two which had grown up from the intercourse of the Ostmen and the Irish. It was not difficult for his gaze to make the circuit of the city, and to note the movements in the chief thoroughfares, for its extent was then no greater than from Corn Market to the Castle, and from Sheep-street, or Ship-street, to the Liffey, which spread at high tide where Essex-street now stands. Above the habitations of the citizens towered the church of the Holy Trinity (now Christ's), and those of St. Owen or Audeon's, St. Mary, and the chapel of St. Michael, while outside the walls numerous other religious edifices met the eye. The narrow limits of the city inspired no feeling of contempt in the breast of this foreign soldier; for, small as it was, Dublin was then larger than most of the

towns of England and Normandy, if we are to judge by the statement of an English chronicler, who tells us that its commerce had become so great in the hands of the Ostmen as to rival that of London itself.* Nor were that stranger's senses offended by the impure odours which the passing breezes bore to him from the confined and crowded houses, and which the summer sun exhaled from the sewerless streets; for Dublin was then no worse in this respect than was Paris or Rouen, or London or Bristol. A city on a sunny day beheld from a height, with its panoramic scenes of moving life, is a suggestive and interesting spectacle; but we dare not affirm that it could have awakened any deeper or softer sentiments in the rude beholder we have been imagining, than the desire for a renewal of free quarters, or the wish, now that things were getting dull and unpromising, to be away with what booty he had already collected to his native valley or mead in Powis or Gloucestershire. However this might be, we may be sure that when he again turned to look seaward, he put the trumpet to his mouth, and sounded a blast that was repeated in every watch-tower round the walls, and that emptied in haste many a well-filled barbican and guard-room!

* William of Newbridge.

The warders on the walls give the alarm, and it is high time, for the whole horizon has become dotted with sails, and a gallant fleet stretches boldly up the shallow bay with the flowing tide, as if its pilots are familiar with the sandbanks and intricacies of the barred haven. Between the Bulls they steer—those sand-banks so named from the bellowing of the waves; and as they come nearer, the black Raven of Scandinavia is seen at the mast-head of each galley; and now it is shouted from man to man of the garrison, and is furtively whispered among the Ostman citizens hurrying into their houses, that Asculf Mac Torcal, the exiled prince of Dublin, has come again to claim his own, and seek vengeance for the surprise of his hearth and the slaughter of his kindred. It is even so, for the Viking Asculf was not the man to sit down brooding over his woes. He spent his winter in a different fashion, sailing from settlement to settlement of his nation in Man and the Orkneys, and their distant fatherland Norway itself; and, now as fruit of his exertions, he has come "with threescore well appointed ships, full freighted with lusty men of war,"* to do battle with those bloody-minded spoilers from Normandy and Wales. Up

* Cambrensis.

the embouchure of the Liffey they come, and run their bows in on the shelving sands, and the soldiery leap into the surf and wade to land, and form in good and orderly array on the ground where probably now stand Merrion-square and Mount-street. They are mostly Norwegians,* duly harnessed in the Scandinavian fashion, " with good brigandines, jacks, and shirts of mail, and shields red in colour, round and bound in iron." Iron-strong they were in mind as well as body,† and led by a Norseman of gigantic strength, known as John the Mad from his furious prowess.‡

It was not difficult, at the first appearance of the returned Ostmen, to get the disciplined ranks of the garrison, Welsh, Flemish and Saxon, into order behind the Norman knights. And, while all is bustle and preparation, an Irish chief of the neighbourhood, Mac Gilleholmoc comes to hold conference with Myles De Cogan, and to offer his services.§ His territory lay near that of the Ost-

* Regan. † Cambrensis. ‡ Cambrensis and Regan.

§ Some have supposed, from the propinquity of this family to Dublin, and from the sound of the concluding part of the name, that they were of Danish extraction. They were pure Milesian, however, as Dr. O'Donovan tells us, sprung from the same stock as the O'Byrnes, and deriving their patronymic from an ancestor who assumed it in honour of St. Moholmoc.

men; and for this reason, if for no other, they were, as a matter of course at this time, enemies. His love for his new neighbours was not much stronger probably than that for his old ones, but then his hostages were in Myles De Cogan's hand, and that made the essential difference. The Norman mistrusted the proffered help of the native, and announced that he would be satisfied by Mac Gilleholmoc's cutting off the retreat of the Ostmen, but at the same time inviting him to kill his own men if they should run; altogether an unnecessary speech, perhaps, for Mac Gilleholmoc, who hated both Norman and Ostman, was very likely to take part with the winning side. He now withdrew accordingly, and posted his men on an eminence overlooking the scene of operations.

The viking and his Norse ally led their men down by the monastery of All Hallows, the site of Trinity College; and by the convent of St. Mary Hoggin, or the Virgin, along the strand where now Dame-street extends; to attack the eastern face of the city, and St. Mary's gate, which stood on the rising of the present Cork-hill, and which derived its name from the church of St. Mary le Dame within the walls.* Myles De Cogan leads forth his impatient

* Whitelaw's History of Dublin.

warriors, and they attack the assailants impetuously; but the Norwegians are too numerous, and hem them in, and John the Mad maintains his reputation, and lops off limbs though cased in armour with single strokes of his battle-axe, and the garrison fighting desperately are forced up the hill and back within the gate. This the Ostmen now assail and climb the walls with their ladders; but the cross-bows are busy above and within, and just at this critical moment the Pole Gate, which stood at the junction of St. Werburgh's and Ship-street at the south side of the city, is thrown open, and Richard De Cogan, and 300 horsemen sheathed in steel, issue forth, and galloping through the fields where Stephen-street and George's-street have since grown up, come round upon the rere of their enemies, and laying their spears in rest, charge them furiously with great shouts; and now St. Mary's Gate is again thrown wide, and Myles De Cogan returns to the attack with a body of horse and foot. The generalship of the Normans prevails; the Ostmen, taken in front and rere, though by inferior forces, at last break and run, and then Mac Gilleholmoc falls upon their fugitives and kills great numbers, some escaping to their ships, and others to the forests. John the Mad dies, fighting valiantly, and, as we may infer

from the Norman chroniclers—for they do not say so directly—surrounded by his enemies; two of them, Myles De Cogan and John De Ridlesford, claiming the honour of killing him. Asculf Mac Torcal escapes to the sands, but is taken almost within reach of his ships, and is brought into the presence of the governor of the city. But, finding himself within sight and audience of a crowd of his enemies, the gallant viking cannot contain himself for mortification and wrath, and stoutly flings them defiance: "We are come here now but a small company, and a few of us; but this is only the beginning, and if God sends me life, you shall see greater matters come to pass before long." Myles De Cogan, who had that day comported himself as an admirable leader and dauntless soldier, now showed himself dead to all the gentle sentiments of chivalry. He was a mere butcher, like most of his compeers, and had no admiration for the courage of a fallen enemy, whom he ordered to be immediately taken out and beheaded.*

* Cambrensis and Regan.

## CHAPTER XIII.

ARCHBISHOP LORCAN O'TUATHAL.—HIS PATRIOTIC LABOURS.—DUBLIN BESIEGED BY THE CONFEDERATES.

THE war of which we are writing has as yet hardly extended its character beyond that of an intestine struggle. It has been a contest between Mac Murrogh, aided by his son-in-law the prince of Thomond, and his foreign auxiliaries, against his personal enemies—the Ard-Righ, the husband and father of Dervorghil, and his rebellious vassals. It has been only an intestine struggle, in which, up to the taking of Waterford, the natives on both sides were the principal performers; but the arrival of Strongbow, and now the death of Mac Murrogh, the great numerical increase of the Normans, and their acquisition by marriage and arms of so much of Leinster, have combined to raise them from the position of mere auxiliaries to that of invaders. The clergy were the only really civilised and intelligent body of the nation at the time, and we have seen that they have already taken the alarm, though not with the energy the occasion required. It is naturally reserved for a member of that body to attempt to

arouse the island to a sense of the danger which menaces it.

Lorcan O'Tuathal, now better known as Saint Laurence O'Toole, was at the time archbishop of Dublin. This illustrious prelate was of the princely family of Imale. Both his father and mother, we are told, were remarkable among a kindly and generous people for hospitality and charity; and Lorcan, after he became abbot of Glendalough in his native district and where he had been educated, was distinguished by the same virtues, and during four years of scarcity was a wonderful benefactor to the neighbouring poor. In the year 1162 he was consecrated archbishop of Dublin in Christ Church, in infringement of the practice of the Ostman cities, which had heretofore sent their prelates to be consecrated at Canterbury. In Dublin as at Glendalough he kept open house, having daily fed before him thirty, forty, or sixty poor persons, besides relieving others; at the same time splendidly entertaining the nobles, though rigidly abstaining himself from the rich wines and dishes set upon his table. Munificent in disposition, he was tall and comely in person, and his dress was in keeping, grave but rich.* He seems to have fully appreciated

* See Ware, and Vita S. Laurentii.

the danger which impended over his country from the audacity and success of the Normans, and, inspired by patriotic zeal, he earnestly laboured not only to wean the Irish from their suicidal quarrels with each other, and to band them against the invaders, but also to enlist in his confederation foreign neighbours, apprehensive of the rapid spread of the Norman power. He allied for his enterprise most of the chiefs of Leinster, as well as Connaught and Meath; he established an understanding with Asculf, the exiled viking of Dublin, and his Scandinavian kindred in the Orkneys; and, in conjunction with the Ard-Righ Ruari, he sent to invite the help of Godred, king of the Isle of Man, reminding him of the ancient alliance between the Irish and Manx, holding out the hope of gain, and setting forth their common danger from the progress of the Normans.*

We have seen in the last chapter the result of the expedition of Asculf Mac Torcal. It was popularly supposed that his threat before execution had reference to the coming attack of his brother confederates; and historians generally agree that had their attempt and his taken place at the one time, the result would have been the recovery of Dublin. Godred, King of Man, was

* Cambrensis.

the ruler of a mixed Ostman and Gaelic people, who spoke the same language as the Gael of Erin, and he gave a willing ear to the arguments of the Irish envoys. It could not have been many weeks after the destruction of Asculf's expedition, that thirty ships of war, well equipped, sailed from Man to blockade the harbour of Dublin, now invested on land by the Irish army.*

Strongbow hastened to Dublin when informed of the approaching danger, and set to work preparing all sorts of necessaries for defence. He sent to the different garrisons requiring all the men that could be spared, and in this way collected a numerous force, both of Normans and Irish, within the town.†

O'Conor completely surrounded the city with an army, which appears to have been great in multitude though not in discipline or fidelity. The Ard-Righ and the men of Connaught, with the king of Meath, O'Ruarc of Breffni, and O'Carrol of Uriel, seem to have encamped at Finglas and Castleknock. The men of Hy-Kinselah, under the new chief whom they had chosen, and other Leinster clans, were stationed at Dalkey; while the Norman historians tell us that some chieftains of Ulster and O'Brien of Thomond were in the

* Cambrensis. † Regan.

confederation also, and that they had their camps respectively at Clontarf and Kilmainham.* These men were the deadly enemies of O'Conor; but we know from the Munster annals, that in this very year the prince of Thomond was compelled by the Ard-Righ to submit at last to his authority and give him hostages; and so the circumstance of his presence here is explained. It will fully account for the extraordinary termination of the siege, which would be otherwise unintelligible.

The Irish cavalry proceeded to destroy all the corn which was growing for the different garrisons of the invaders.† For two months the Normans lay completely shut up between this army and the Manx shipping.‡ At last provisions began to fail; there was no present hope of help out of England; and, to add to their trouble, Donal Kavanagh and some other Leinster chiefs, who had remained in their alliance, contriving to make their way into the town through the besiegers' army, brought word that the Wexford men had revolted, and, joined by the Irish of Hy-Kinselah, were besieging Fitz-Stephen in his castle at Carrig, and that if he was not relieved within three days he would be compelled to surrender. Their affairs

* Regan and Cambrensis. † Four Masters.
‡ Cambrensis.

were looking desperate, and Strongbow summoned a council of his captains, to the number of twenty, including Prendergast, Cogan, Fitzgerald, Raymond Le Gros, Fitz-Henry, Robert De Quincy, Walter De Riddlesford, Myles Fitz-David, Richard De Maronie, and Walter Bluett. He reminded them that they had only food for fifteen days, that a measure of wheat sold for a mark, a measure of barley for half a mark, and proposed that he should send to Roderick, and offer, if he would raise the siege, to become his liegeman and hold Leinster of him.* The council approved of his suggestion. It was resolved to entreat Archbishop Lorcan to act as mediator in the matter;† and they accordingly sent out to him for this purpose, for he had a camp of his own, in the lines of the besiegers,‡ composed probably of the O'Tuathals and other clans over whom he had hereditary influence. The Ard-Righ, advised most likely by the archbishop, had the discernment to decline the proposal

* Regan. Many doubt that the chronicle bearing his name was dictated by Maurice Regan, or even that there was such a person at all; but whoever was the writer, it is plainly made up from the narrative of eye-witnesses and actors, in the same way as the work of Cambrensis.

† Regan. ‡ Cambrensis.

of the besieged, which it was easy to foresee would be observed by them, like the former treaties entered into by Mac Murrogh, just so long as it suited their purpose. O'Conor would agree to no terms but the surrender of Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and all the other forts and castles, and the departure from the land, on a fixed day, of all the invaders. If those terms were not accepted, he declared that he would assault the city without further delay. When the archbishop brought in this answer, "which he delivered with an audible voice to the earl, in the presence of the council, they were amazed and grew to be pensive."* They sat for a while in silence, when Myles De Cogan, according to one chronicler, but Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Raymond Le Gros, according to another, suddenly started up and reminded them of King Henry's proclamation, and that they had no hope from England or anywhere else, but only in success; "We are here a good number of good men; our best remedy is to make a sally, which is least expected by the enemy, and I hope in the goodness of God that we shall have the victory, or at least die with honour. And my desire is that I may be the man appointed to head the enterprise."†

* Regan. † Idem.

Their position was desperate, and their natural hardihood returned at this bold speech. It was received with general acclamation, and the captains were commanded to draw out their companies, which were divided into three bodies, Cogan and Raymond leading the first and second divisions, and Strongbow and Fitz-Gerald the third and largest.* They made the sally about break of day, before the besiegers were astir,† and directed their course towards Finglas, King Ruari's head quarters. "In the name of God," shouted De Cogan, "let us try our valor on those naked savages, or die like men,"‡—and so much ardour did some of the young knights exhibit, that Fitz-Gerald's two sons, Gerald and Alexander, though with their father in the rear body, spurred so hard that they overtook the van, and were in with the foremost.§ The Irish were careless and felt secure, expecting no attack,‖ when the Normans broke in furiously amongst them. Raymond, calling on St. David, transfixed two men with one stroke of his lance, according to his kinsman Cambrensis, and Earl Richard and the other commanders likewise "per-

* Regan and Cambrensis.

† Stanihurst. Cambrensis says, more improbably, that this sally and surprise took place at nine in the morning.

‡ Regan. He called them naked, because they did not wear armour.

§ Cambrensis. ‖ Regan.

formed wonders, but especially Meyler Fitz-Henry's valor was admired by all men.*" King Ruari, who was bathing thus early in the river Tolka, had not time to dress himself, but, snatching up his mantle, fled away. His camp was broken up, and the next day the other camps of the confederates dissolved of their own accord; probably from treachery, which the conduct just after of the prince of Thomond gives reason to believe. In O'Conor's camp, the Normans found "as much corn, meal, and pork as sufficed to victual the city for one whole year."†

## CHAPTER XIV.

STRONGBOW MARCHES TO RELIEVE FITZ-STEPHEN—THE FIGHT IN IDRONE—FITZ-STEPHEN TAKEN BY THE IRISH—EXPEDITION OF STRONGBOW AND O'BRIEN AGAINST OSSORY—ACTS OF STRONGBOW AT FERNS—DEPARTS FOR ENGLAND.

THE day after the siege of Dublin was raised, Strongbow, leaving Cogan and a strong garrison, set out to release Fitz-Stephen, shut up near Wexford. They marched forward in all haste, for

* Regan. † Ibid.

Fitz-Gerald and Raymond were uneasy for their kinsman and his wife and children;* and Strongbow remembered that Fitz-Stephen was one of the first to respond to his summons for help when besieged in Dublin, by despatching a portion of his slender band.† They pushed forward; but in the woods of Idrone, in the modern county of Carlow, their march was harassed and delayed by the vigorous opposition of the O'Ryans. The fight was long and hotly maintained. Meyler Fitz-Henry, foremost in leading on the Normans, was thrown from his horse by the blow of a stone, and Gilbert, Strongbow's son, an inexperienced youth of seventeen, was so terrified by the shouts of the Irish that he turned his rein—the traditions say—and fled back to Dublin with his company, bringing word that his father and the army were cut to pieces.‡ At last O'Ryan fell dead by an arrow from the cross-bow of Nichol the Monk, and after the loss of their chieftain his followers broke and dispersed.

The earl soon received word that he was too late to rescue his friends, that Carrig Castle had fallen

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* Cambrensis. † Regan.

‡ The contemporary Norman historians do not allude to this circumstance; it may be, through consideration for the powerful and widely connected family of De Clare.

into the hands of the revolted Wexford and Hy-Kinselah men, and that the garrison had been put to the sword, with the exception of Fitz-Stephen, William Nott, and four or five other knights;* and he received a menace, that if he advanced further, their lives, too, would be sacrificed. The Wexford men, feeling that their town was indefensible against the Norman arms, set it on fire, and retreated with their prisoners to an island near the coast called Beg-Eiré. The earl, not having vessels to attack them there, abandoned the enterprise for the present, and turned his steps towards Waterford, which seems to have been his head quarters. The same traditions to which we have before alluded say that his young son, who had fled from the fight in Idrone, now presented himself before Strongbow, after the successful termination of his march; and that the father was

* We may conclude from his name, that Nott was a native Welshman, like Prendergast and some other knights, and so many of the soldiery of the invaders.

Cambrensis says that Carrig was taken by treachery, but Regan relates the matter as above; and Fitz-Stephen's message to Strongbow in Dublin shows that resolute though he was, he deemed it impossible to hold out longer than three days. Where we have only a one-sided relation of events, it is necessary to guard against the colouring which men bestow on the deeds of their friends, and we have only the Norman

so overwhelmed with shame and rage at the stain affixed to his chivalric name and family, that he drew his sword, and killed his recreant son on the instant.*

At Waterford a message came from O'Brien—who, it would appear, had not yet returned home from his feigned share in the siege of Dublin,—now inviting his brother-in-law, the Norman

story of many of the most important incidents of this war. Regan was not a Norman, to be sure, but the translator, and it may be enlarger, of his record was.

* The monuments of both father and son are in Christ Church, Dublin. Stanihurst wonders that Cambrensis should have concealed this occurrence, which he is of opinion took place. He cites as his reasons for the belief, the careful investigations into the traditions by Sir Henry Sydney, knight, who repaired the monument, and the following inscription over it, which was defaced by the falling in of the roof of the church :—

"Nate ingrate ! mihi pugnanti terga dedisti ;
Non mihi, sed genti et regno quoque terga dedisti."

or, as Hanmer thus translates it in his Chronicle :—

"My sonne unkinde did'st fly the field, thy father fighting hard ;
Nor me, nor English birth did'st weigh, nor kingdome did'st regard."

At whatever time the monument was erected, it is plain from this inscription that it was the general belief that the story of the occurrence was true.

leader, to unite with him in a descent on the prince of Ossory, the resolute enemy of the late king of Leinster. The invitation was accepted, and the two allies joined their forces in the O'Brenans' country of Idough, near modern Castlecomer. Mac Gill-Phadraig was unable to resist the united forces of the Normans and the Dal-Cas, and he sent to ask for a passport to come to their camp to arrange an accommodation. Strongbow deputed Prendergast to transact this matter. There appears to have been some friendship between this knight and Mac Gill-Phadraig, originated when the former was in the service of the prince of Ossory; when Regan specially mentions that that chieftain would not hear of the design entertained by his people of cutting off the Welshman and his party. Prendergast having obtained the pledge of the captains, Norman and Thomond, that his convoy should be inviolate, rode out and returned with the Ossory chief. When brought into the presence of Strongbow and O'Brien, they charged him with treason to their father-in-law, his late liege Mac Murrogh; and the altercation went so far that the commanders, Irish and Norman, advised De Clare to hang him without further delay. But Sir Maurice of Prendergast, ever high-spirited and honorable, ordered his followers

to horse, and mounting himself, reproached his companions-in-arms with bringing disgrace on themselves and him, and "swore by the cross on his sword that no man should lay hands on the prince of Ossory." Earl Richard grew ashamed of the treacherous proposal to which he was lending no unwilling ear, and bade Prendergast lead away his charge in safety. On his way back, the latter and his company killed nine or ten of the Thomond men whom they found ravaging the country, and having brought Mac Gill-Phadraig to his camp in the woods, they lodged with him that night, and next day returned to their army. This expedition ended with the submission of the prince of Ossory.* O'Brien returned to Limerick, and the earl went to Ferns for eight days, where Murrogh O'Byrne, an inveterate foe of King Diarmaid, was brought before him, beheaded, and his body barbarously cast to the dogs.† At the same time, a son of Donal Kavanagh was executed, but we are not told for what offence. As if to propitiate the young man's father for this act, and to retain him in the alliance to which he

* Regan.

† This appears to have been the chieftain who, meeting Mac Murrogh in a wood before his departure for England, warned him to begone from his territory.

had remained unnaturally faithful, Strongbow bestowed on him what the chronicler calls "the plains of Leinster," most likely that portion of the Mac Murrogh patrimony which comprised the modern county of Carlow, and where Donal's descendants, the Kavanaghs, were afterwards most numerous. He seems to have thought it judicious also to recognise the right of Moriertach, whom the clansmen of Hy-Kinselah had selected to fill the place of King Diarmaid, to the possession of what appear to have been the northern districts of the present county of Wexford.* Strongbow was anxious to get trouble off his hands in Ireland, for his relations with King Henry were becoming more critical. He went back to Waterford, where he found his uncle Hervey, whom he had sent to King Henry after the return of Raymond Le Gros. Hervey brought him a message from the monarch, requiring his immediate appearance before him. He had no choice but to acquiesce, for he had now well nigh expended his army in the war, and there was no chance of further supplies while the King was unfriendly. He contrived to leave, however, sufficient ward in the different garrisons before sailing from Waterford.† Accompanied by Hervey, he landed in

* Regan. † Campion.

England, and met the king at Newenham, near Gloucester.

The interview between them was not, at first, of a very friendly character; but, by the intercession of his uncle, Strongbow's submission was at last graciously received. The earl swore allegiance, and surrendered Dublin and the country round it, and all towns and castles on the coast. The rest of his acquisitions in Leinster were then conceded to him and his heirs, holding them of the king and his heirs.* The king now restored to him also his English estates, confiscated at the time he had issued the proclamation against him.† Henry was busied collecting an army to come over to Ireland himself, and, after this arrangement with De Clare, he marched to Milford Haven as the most convenient place for his troops and shipping to assemble.

While the incidents of which we have been speaking were in occurrence, the one-eyed prince of Breffni,‡ who seems to have been a better soldier than he had been a lover, was chafing fiercely, among his wild Leitrim mountains, at the unfortunate termination of that confederacy which had promised so well; and hearing that Strongbow had left Dublin, he resolved to attempt, sin-

* Cambrensis. † William of Newbridge. ‡ Cambrensis.

gle-handed, against that city, what he had failed in conjunction with others to accomplish. Accordingly, in the month of September, he descended with his clans, and rapidly advanced against Dublin. De Cogan, the vigilant seneschal, led forth his men to encounter him, and an obstinate and sanguinary engagement took place, in which many fell on both sides, among others the tanist of Breffni, O'Ruarc's son, Aodh or Hugh, "a gallant youth." The Norman discipline and tactics and the rush of their mailed cavalry, in which lay their chief strength, once more prevailed, and the irregular bands of the mountaineers were repulsed.*

## CHAPTER XV.

KING HENRY IN IRELAND—SUBMISSION OF MUNSTER AND CONNAUGHT—HIS POLICY WITH THE IRISH CHIEFS.—THE CHRISTMAS ON HOGGIN GREEN.

On St. Luke's day, the 18th October, 1171, King Henry the Second of England arrived at Waterford with 400 ships,† having on board a formid-

* Cambrensis and the Four Masters.

† Gervas and Brompton.

able army. The Norman chroniclers inform us that it comprised 500 knights and 4000 soldiers, horse and foot;* but that it was much more numerous we have reason to believe, from his very extensive preparations for it, evidenced by the Pipe Roll of the year 1171, still extant.† To fit out the expedition, he had levied on the landed proprietors throughout his extensive dominions the tax of escuage or commutation for personal service. As the army was disembarking, a white or light coloured hare sprang out from a thicket, which was laid hands on immediately as a good omen, and presented to the king as a token of success.‡ Strongbow, who accompanied Henry, now delivered up to him the city of Waterford, and did homage for Leinster.§

A deputation from the insurgent men of Wexford presented themselves before the English monarch with humble professions of duty, and giving Robert Fitz-Stephen into his hands, whom they had taken prisoner at the Carrig, charged him with having invaded their country without Henry's permission, and so occasioned much trouble and mischief. The politic king, who was anxious to make a favourable impression on the

* Cambrensis and Regan. † See Lynch's Feudal Dignities.
‡ Roger De Hovenden. § Regan.

natives, and who adopted a conciliatory policy during his stay in the country, rebuked Fitz-Stephen sharply for his conduct, and ordered him to be heavily fettered and consigned to close imprisonment in Reginald's Tower. Diarmaid Mac Carthy, prince of Desmond or South Munster, hearing of Henry's arrival on his border, now came to Waterford, swore allegiance, and became his tributary. The majority of the hierarchy attended at the same time, to tender their submission and fealty, in obedience to the directions from Rome. Among them was Archbishop Lorcan O'Tuathal, who seems to have despaired of effecting any union among his countrymen, after the dissolution of that confederacy which he had laboured so hard to establish.* Henry was of course duly informed of the part the archbishop had taken in resisting the Normans; but he was too clever a diplomatist to provoke, by any exhibition of resentment, one who had shown himself so zealous a patriot and so able a statesman.

King Henry now left Waterford, on an expedition in search of the allegiance of the Munster chiefs. At Lismore, whose bishop was the Pope's legate in Ireland, he stayed two days, and gave directions about the building of a castle.† Thence

* Ware, and Vita S. Laurentii. † Regan.

he marched to Cashel, where he was met by the princes of Thomond and Ossory, bitterly hostile to each other, by O'Faelan, prince of the Decies, and most of the other chieftains of the south. Here, on the rock of Cashel, where once the kings of Munster had been inaugurated, and which commanded a panoramic view of the rich neighbouring plains, he received the homage and the hostages of those chiefs; within a church whose magnificent architecture testified to him that, despite the disunion of its multitudinous principalities, this was no barbaric land. The ready submission of those chieftains is easily accounted for. Hostile to each other, each felt that he would have to encounter, single-handed, the formidable army Henry brought with him, more numerous than any he could bring into the field, and irresistible with its novel tactics and equipment. Nay more, each chieftain felt that his neighbours would be only too glad to lend a hand in his destruction to the invader; and so he hastened, on the approach of the Norman monarch, to make his submission. Henry received these new liegemen with all honour and courtesy, and loaded them with munificent gifts;* but, at the same time, to insure something more than this

* Cambrensis.

mere verbal submission, he placed governors of his own over the Ostman cities of Cork and Limerick, which Mac Carthy and O'Brien delivered up to him. Having terminated this expedition to his satisfaction, he marched back to Waterford, where he released Fitz-Stephen from prison, and restored to him his possessions, excepting Wexford, at the intercession of his lords, who represented that this captain was too valuable an auxiliary to dispense with.* Some of the Wexford rebels against Fitz-Stephen were likewise soon after put to death, as earnest of the honesty of Henry's conciliatory policy, and of the danger of disobedience to Norman rule.

Leaving Robert Fitz-Bernard, with his household or immediate following, to garrison Waterford, the king of England set out for Dublin, through Ossory, and by slow marches, to give opportunity to the chieftains of the country to come forward and make their submission. This each of them appears to have done, as the Norman army approached his neighbourhood. Among others who came in person to do homage to King Henry on this march, or afterwards in Dublin, were those old enemies of the late king of Leinster, Mac Faelain of Offaly, and O'Tuathal of

* Cambrensis.

Imale; also Mac Gilleholmoc, lord of the country beside Dublin traversed by the Dodder—the chief who had joined Myles de Cogan against the Ostmen; but who, when O'Conor laid siege to Dublin, had united with his countrymen against the invaders. O'Carroll came in from his plains of Uriel, and O'Ruarc from the hills of Breffni; hopeless, after his last repulse by De Cogan, and apprehensive for his possessions in Meath.

Henry seems to have entertained some hope that the Irish monarch O'Conor would have likewise presented himself in this list of submission; but he was disappointed, for though reduced in circumstances, the Ard-Righ Ruari was not fallen so low as to fling down his crown at the mere presence of his enemy. Henry felt that it was too late in the season for a campaign against him, but he resolved to try the effect of intimidation; and, for this purpose, sent Fitz-Adelm and De Lacy with a portion of his army as far as the Shannon. Like the chieftains of Munster and Leinster who had just submitted to the Norman king, O'Conor had native neighbours to fear. From the commencement of the invasion, he had, on the one hand, the active hostility of the men of Thomond and Ormond, and on the other, the more passive but equally deep rooted enmity of the princes of Ulster. Nominally monarch of the

whole island, he had never been able, save in the siege of Dublin, to concentrate against the invaders the forces of more than two of the five kingdoms; and since the break up, through his negligence as a commander, of the confederacy which Archbishop Lorcan had created, the influence and the resources of the Ard-Righ had undergone a serious diminution. His power was now strictly limited within the bounds of his hereditary kingdom of Connaught. There, however, the clans were still obedient to him, and the country was naturally strong, and he was yet powerful enough to set at defiance, at this season, the menace of Henry's lieutenants, who, foiled in their purpose, returned to Dublin as they came. Cambrensis, to increase the importance of Henry's visit to Ireland, and to afford some grounds for that monarch's assumption, at this time, of the title of Lord of Ireland, asserts that O'Conor tendered his submission and swore fealty to the crown of England, through De Lacy and Fitz-Adelm; but this absurd assertion, which was easily made, is disproved on the evidence of other English as well as Irish writers, and by subsequent events of which we have account.* As to Ulster, as yet remote from the invasion, she took no

* See Benedict, Abbot of Peterborough, the Records in Birmingham Tower, and the Irish Annalists.

notice of the arrival of the Norman monarch, and was, in fact, too busy with a sanguinary civil war, to devote any attention to the circumstance.*

Christmas now drew nigh, and the wily Plantagenet resolved to earn a character for munificent hospitality, the virtue most esteemed among the Irish. Though Dublin was then a city of great commerce,† there was no edifice within it roomy enough for the royal purpose, and on the open space outside the walls known as "Hoggin Green," so called from the neighbouring convent, Henry erected a huge pavilion of smoothed and plastered wattles, in the Irish fashion, and of excellent workmanship.‡ He had the walls hung with rich tapestry of Flanders, and the tables plentifully and delicately laid out; and then, after the manner of the country, he invited all, rich and poor, without distinction, to come and partake of his entertainment. There were jousts and tournaments in the Norman fashion, mimes and music; and the fame thereof soon spread far and wide. The Irish were a gay and genial people, free from social reserve and fond of the companionship of strangers; and the neighbouring lords and chiefs, with their followers, flocked in great

* Rer. Hib. Script., tom. ii., chap. xiii.

† William of Newbridge. ‡ Hovenden.

crowds to Dublin, where this royal stranger so splendidly kept open house, just as they would have visited each other at any extraordinary festivity. The outdoor sports took place on the ground where College-green and William-street now stand, and the royal pavilion occupied the locality where Castle-market has been erected. "It was wonderful," says one of the narrators, "to see the pastimes, the musicians, the masking, mumming, and strange shows; the gold and silver, the plate, the dainty dishes furnished with all sorts of fish and flesh, the wines, the spices, the delicate and sumptuous banquets; the orderly services, the comely march and seemly array of all officers, the knights, lords, and esquires in rich attire; the tilting in complete armour, with barbed horses, when the staves shivered and flew in splinters, safer to sit than on an Irish pillion that playeth crosse and pile with the rider. The plain, honest people admired, and no mervaile." At table, the dish which chiefly astonished the guests was the Norman delicacy of cranes' flesh, a bird held in abhorrence by the Irish as an article of food.*

It must indeed have been a quaint, a brilliant, and interesting spectacle within that banquet-

* Hanmer, Cambrensis, and Stanihurst.

ting hall on Hoggin Green. How they marvelled at each other—those Normans in silken robes, trimmed with minever and the fur of the squirrel; and these Irish, in their woollen and linen vestments, bright-coloured and flowing. The costume of the Gael was very picturesque and becoming. The linen cothone was dyed yellow with saffron, and hung in wide folds nearly to the knee. It performed the part of a modern kilt with some, but others wore the truis or trowsers of striped elastic weft, fitting close to the limb, and enclosing foot as well as leg; precisely the same garment as Strabo describes on the learned Gaelic druid Abaris, who visited Greece six hundred years before the Christian era. Their shoes were flat, had pointed toes, and were light, so as not to cumber the wearers, who were wonderfully nimble, and could outrun a horseman, or leap from the ground behind a chevalier riding at full speed.* They had a girdle round the waist, and over the shoulders a frieze mantle; or with the chiefs, one of a finer material, of scarlet or some other bright colour, and fringed and embroidered with threads of gold. The yellow cothone divided above the elbow, and the sleeves fell loose nearly to the knee, and on their

* See Castide's narrative, in Froissart's Chronicle.

bare arms many of the chiefs and their bards wore bracelets of gold or silver, and brooches or skewers of the same clasping their mantles. The dyes in those garments were very brilliant. The spinning and weaving of their linen and woollen were probably the task of the women and of their serfs. The trade of the smith or worker in metals was in greater repute, and was an industry which the clansmen did not disdain to exercise.

Of the politeness of the Normans we cannot, despite their chivalric training, form a very high estimate, judging of it by the narratives in their own chronicles. The squire Henry Castide at a later period artlessly lets us know, through Sir John Froissart, how greatly the Irish kings, guests at King Richard's table, were stared at by his knights; and Cambrensis tells us how the gallants in Prince John's train provoked a widespread insurrection of the Irish by their ridicule of their costume and manners, which they chose to consider barbarous because different from their own. According to modern and all true notions of politeness, the Irish would have been considered a better mannered race, as they respected the feelings of others. They were more uncouth in some particulars, it may be; for honest Castide finds fault with them for gri-

macing at table; but in the essential points of courtesy, there is no doubt but that they surpassed their entertainers. The Irish were very cordial to strangers, and respected their customs even when they considered them not so good as their own.* The Normans, who had not yet shaken off the Teutonic coarseness, sneered at all novelties of habit and appearance. Thus they laughed at the Irish beards, because they themselves, in a less becoming and less natural fashion, shaved the whole face, or wore only the moustache. In like manner, they despised the hair flowing on the shoulders, or *coolun* of the natives, and the *glibh*, or that worn thick on the top of the head; and indeed in this matter of the glibh we must coincide in their antipathy, for, tasteless at best, it must have been very disagreeable in the poorer people, who were not particular in taking care of it. Another point which mightily offended those haughty strangers, was the feeling and principle of equality which existed between the chief and his clansmen, and which made them unmindful or impatient of the distinctions of rank so jealously observed by the Normans. Castide complains that "they pay no particular

* See Castide's account of his relations with the Irish chiefs under his charge.

attention to any gentleman, though their own country is governed by kings." Every clan was a little republic, in which the chief was only the elected leader; the ties of kindred produced companionship between him and his followers, "and they had everything in common but the bed." The Normans at King Henry's table were horrified to see the Irish princes and lords, when the first dishes were served, make their bards and chief servants sit down beside them, and then eat from the same plate and drink from the same goblet. The English king and his nobles inwardly despised their guests for the familiarity, rather than for the uncleanliness of eating and drinking from the same vessels with their attendants. We may conclude so, for they were not over nice themselves, and although enormous table-cloths of linen covered the board,* under the rich plate, and wines, and viands, the much more necessary article of a fork or spoon was not present; nor, indeed, were forks introduced into Europe until the fifteenth century, and they were a novelty in England

* See a Roll of the Household Expenses of Richard De Swinfield, bishop of Hereford in 1289 and 1290. Printed for the Camden Society. Also "Rolls of the King's Court," a century earlier.

even so late as 1652.* At his right hand, the post of honour, each Irish chief placed his bard, a very different position from that accorded by the Norman lords to their poets and minstrels.

The contempt with which the Normans regarded the peculiarities of their guests was, however, on the present occasion, carefully concealed; as we may perceive by the good humour wit which the latter, a race sensitive and easily offended, departed from the revel. Henry, unlike the foolish governors who accompanied his young son some years after to Ireland, had a policy of conciliation in hand; and the gallants of his train durst not thwart or trifle with the views of such a master by ill-timed levity; while, at the same time, some of the best knights of his army having served in Wales, (many of them, like Fitz-Stephen, Fitz-Gerald, and Fitz-Henry, sprung from Welsh mothers), were no strangers to Celtic customs, for the Kymry of Wales were cousins-german to the Gael of Erin.

King Henry presided at his feast in great majesty, and in his royal robes. This monarch, gifted with great natural abilities, and with an

* Forks were first introduced into Italy, and it is probable that we are indebted to the chop-sticks of the Chinese for the idea.

amount of learning wonderful in a layman of his time, is described, now in his thirty-eighth year, by a cotemporary, as a man courteous, cheerful, and eloquent; of the middle size, with a high complexion, his head large and round, his eyes fiery and stern, his voice tremulous, his neck short, broad breasted, strong armed, but big bellied; though to keep down this deformity he was very abstemious and exercised over much—often from daybreak until night, hunting or hawking; in disposition he was parsimonious at home, but most liberal abroad.*

Conspicuous among his nobles at this Christmas revel on Hoggin-green, was a certain knight, very tall and mighty, very sinewy and strong, of a pale complexion, and fierce and daring mien; bred to the wars from his youth, an audacious and valiant soldier, oftentimes carried away by his rashness, and remarkable among his fellow-soldiers for religious devotion. This was Sir John De Courcy, afterwards so famous in the Ulster and Connaught wars and elsewhere—the paladin, *par excellence*, of the invasion. Like so many more of these knights, his father had been a noble Norman and his mother a native of Wales.

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* Cambrensis.

He was married to a daughter of Godred, King of Man, by whom, however, he had no issue.

In the same company there was another baron, a contrast to De Courcy in appearance and disposition, as he was afterwards his rival and enemy. This man's stature was low and his proportions deformed, his eyes were black and deep set, his nose rather flat, and the right side of his face had been seamed and disfigured by some accident. His person, however, was sinewy and compact, his manner was sober and modest; and he was a good soldier and vigilant commander. In disposition he was avaricious and ambitious, "and, after his wife's death, he was much addicted to wantonness, in the selection of objects for which he was not very choice." Such is the description given by Cambrensis of Sir Hugh De Lacy, the ancestor of a family which has given some gallant soldiers to Ireland.

Present at the feast was likewise another warrior of high rank, afterwards conspicuous in the invasion. Sir William Fitz-Adelm claimed descent from Charlemagne, and derived his patronymic of De Burgo from his ancestor, John, Earl of Comyn, as governor of the king's chief towns.* The family of De Burgo, or Burke, became one

* Burke's Peerage.

of the most powerful and wide spread planted in Ireland by this invasion. We are told that Fitz-Adelm was of the middle size and corpulent, courtly but deceitful, and a worshipper of Bacchus and Venus. We may remark, in parenthesis, that the chronicler Cambrensis, who gives us these portraits, was the kinsman of the Fitz-Geralds; and that he was, therefore, no friend to their rival De Burgo; or, it may be, to De Lacy either.

Henry, in the present instance at least, was a monarch after the Irish heart; and the Gaelic chiefs left him, loaded with rich gifts from his hand, and delighted with his hospitality. And now there was an interruption to the revels in the Norman camp. The skeleton came, unbidden, to their feast. Cambrensis says that the sacrilegious act of some bowmen, in cutting down trees round a churchyard at Finglas, planted by certain holy men, was the cause of the plague which broke out in the army; but other writers tell us it was occasioned by the change of climate and food, and the great concourse of people in an undrained town, as Dublin then was, corrupting the air.* During the stay of the English king and his numerous troops in Dublin, provisions, we are informed, attained an excessive price.†

* The British Chronicle, and Hollinshed. † Regan.

## CHAPTER XVI.

KING HENRY'S POLICY WITH THE IRISH CLERGY—AND WITH HIS OWN LORDS.—DUBLIN COLONIZED BY THE ENGLISH.

HAVING disarmed opposition in Leinster and Munster by the presence of a large army and by a policy of conciliation, King Henry proceeded astutely to make a firmer basis for his authority by giving the Irish clergy an interest in English rule. For this purpose, and to establish the ordinances of the Pope's bull, he moved the legate Christianus, bishop of Lismore, to summon a synod of the Irish clergy at Cashel. Accordingly, there assembled at the summons of the legate, and by the king's command, Donat, archbishop of Cashel; Laurence, archbishop of Dublin; and Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam; "with their suffragans and fellow bishops, abbots, archdeacons, priors, deans, and other heads of the church of Ireland, to provide remedy for its reformation."* The king sent on his own behalf Ralph, abbot of Buldevais in Normandy; Ralph, archdeacon of Landaff; Nicholas, the chaplain; "and divers other good clerks." Sundry good

* Cambrensis.

statutes and wholesome laws, says Cambrensis the Norman cleric, were devised at the synod, and which the king afterwards confirmed. He enumerates those statutes to be:—

*First.*—That the Irish should in future avoid marriages with their kinsfolk and cousins within the prohibited degree.

*Second.*—That the children should be catechised outside the church door, and baptized in the font appointed for the purpose within the church.

*Third.*—That every Christian should yearly pay faithfully and truly to the church of his parish, tithe of his cattle, corn, and other produce.

*Fourth.*—That the church lands and possessions throughout Ireland should be free from all secular exactions and impositions; and especially that no lords or chiefs, or their sons or families, should levy coyn and livery, cosheries or cuddies, thenceforth on said lands or territories.*

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* *Coyn and livery* were food, entertainment, or money for the soldiers, and forage for their horses; *cuddies* were a night's entertainment in board and lodging; *coshery* was an exaction of provisions and lodging for the chief and his retinue; so that it will be seen that all those various terms mean nearly the same thing.—See Ware, vol. 2, chap. XII.

*Fifth.*—That the clergy should be exempt in future from the eric or blood-money levied for a murdered man on all the relatives of his slayer.

*Sixth.*—That every sick or weak person should make his will and testament before a priest and some of his neighbours; and that all his debts and servants' wages having been paid, his effects should be divided into three parts—of which one should go to his children, one to his wife, and one to the church. If he left no children or no wife, that the division should be into two parts, of which one should go to his widow or children, as the case might be, and one to the church.

*Seventh.*—That every Christian should have proper Christian burial.

*Finally*, that the divine service of the Irish church should have the like order and manner of the English church; "for it is meet and right," continues the pious Norman, "as by God's providence and appointment Ireland is now become subject to the king of England, that that nation should take from thence the order, rule, and manner of reforming themselves, and to live in better fashion. For whatever good thing is befallen to the church and realm of Ireland, either in religion or peaceable government, they owe the same to the king of England, and

are to be thankful to him for it; for before his coming into the land, many and all sorts of wickedness flowed and reigned among them, all which now by his authority and goodness are abolished."

The reader will see from this hypocritical chronicler, how artfully the king of England sought to win to his side the influence of the Irish clergy, by enlarging their dues and tithes, and by freeing them from burdens, many of which they had in common with other sections of the population good reason to complain of. Giolla Mac Liag, or, as his name is latinized, Gelasius, archbishop of Armagh, did not attend this synod by reason of his age and weakness, which were so great that his only sustenance was the milk of a white cow which travelled with him wherever he went. Some say that the venerable prelate had other and patriotic reasons for absenting himself, that it was owing to an understanding with Ruari O'Conor, and that he convened a little later a synod of the clergy of the north, in opposition to that summoned for Henry. Cambrensis, however, asserts, whether truly or not, that he afterwards came to Dublin, and gave his consent to the statutes decreed at Cashel. This synod was held early in the year 1172.

Henry next assembled a sort of parliament or

council at Lismore, at which he got a number of the Irish chiefs to swear to receive and observe the English laws.*

The king's jealousy of Strongbow still continued, and the latter having found his presence distasteful in Dublin, passed the winter at Kildare.† To balance the power of the inheritor of Leinster, Henry conferred the seignory of the kingdom of Meath on Hugh De Lacy, on the service of fifty knights. He granted away large possessions in Cork, Kerry, and Limerick to the Fitz-Geralds; he gave great tracts also in Cork to Robert Fitz-Stephen and Myles De Cogan, and to De Courcy he offered Ulster. Those gifts of territory were made without any consultation with the native possessors, and the grants in the south and north at least were yet unconquered, and had to be made good at the point of the lance. Henry next conferred appointments of high feudal dignity on some of the chief lords of the invasion. De Lacy he made lord constable, Strongbow lord marshal, and Sir Bertram De Verdon high seneschal. The dignity of chief butler, one of the most important in the courts of France and Normandy, he bestowed on Theobald Fitz-Walter, the nephew of Thomas á Becket,

* Matthew Paris. † Regan.

and no doubt in the hope of redeeming in some sort his credit with the friends of that murdered prelate.*

The winter was wonderfully tempestuous, so much so that scarcely a ship made its way across the sea, and no news arrived from England throughout the whole season. Henry, impatient for intelligence, repaired to Wexford as a nearer point to the opposite shore than Dublin. There living in comparative solitude, he passed his time in intrigues to win over Cogan, Raymond, Richard Makerell, and other captains from Strongbow's interests to his own.† The weather having at last moderated about the middle of Lent, with an easterly wind some ships came from England and Aquitaine, and they brought serious news. Two Roman cardinals, Albert and Theodine, had arrived in Normandy to investigate the circumstances of Becket's death; and they sent to command Henry to come before them, threatening, in case of refusal, to lay his kingdom under an interdict. Intelligence was also brought to him of the rebellion of three of his sons; and the news so afflicted him, says Cambrensis, that he "sweated with anguish." He had intended to remain in Ireland during the summer, for the purpose of

* Camden. † Cambrensis.

an expedition to subdue O'Conor.* The calls for his departure were, however, too imperative; and to restrain Strongbow, he appointed De Lacy chief governor in Ireland, with Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald under his eye as wardens and constables of Dublin. He left Humphrey De Bohun, Robert Fitz-Bernard, and Hugh De Grandeville, to command in Waterford; and William Fitz-Adelm, Philip De Hastings, and Philip De Braosa, wardens in Wexford. Having made these appointments, on Easter Monday, the 17th of April, 1172, he took shipping at sunrise outside the bar of Wexford bay, and a strong westerly gale blowing, he arrived by noon at St. David's Head, on the opposite coast of Wales. He brought Myles De Cogan with him out of Ireland, for it appears that his jealousy of the hardy adventurers who had preceded him here, and the apprehension of their revolt, were not confined to Strongbow.

The importance of finding other citizens besides the Ostmen for his Irish capital of Dublin had occurred to Henry before he left the country; and he accordingly made it over to the townsmen of Bristol, to inhabit and hold it from him and his heirs for ever, with all the liberties and free customs which they enjoyed in their own city

* Benedict, abbot of Peterborough.

and throughout England.* A colony from Bristol came across forthwith, and established itself within the walls of Dublin, expelling the Ostman inhabitants, who thus driven from their houses, made a suburb for themselves on the north bank of the Liffey, facing their old home, and which received the name of Ostmanstown, afterwards corrupted into Oxmantown. Here, with its change of masters, came, we see, one more change of population for this city, which even then in the twelfth century was ancient, and had undergone many vicissitudes. Here the heathen Dane had pirated and traded, and stored the plunder of many a christian church from Armagh to Iona. Hither, when ruled by the careless Milesian, in whose hands cities did not expand, had wandered the venerable Patrick, to baptize Alphin Mac Eochy and his subjects, in that well in the green valley outside the town, where the present cathedral afterwards arose, and where he symbolized to them the idea of the Trinity by a shamrock plucked from the grass.† Further back, in the youth of time, we come to the era of the Tuatha-Danaan, those merchants and artificers

* The well is still to be seen within the walls of the present cathedral.

† See Whitelaw's History of Dublin.

who raised the port to note, and left it famous for the recognition of the Greek geographer Ptolemy. Onwards still into the depths of undated antiquity, and we stand beside the origin of the city—the clearing of an open space on "the brow of the hazel wood" (which High-street now covers), and the raising of a rude hamlet and the laying down of hurdles on the soft ooze of the river bank to give footing down to the ford; from whence the name *Bally-ath-Cliath*, or "the town of the ford of hurdles," as we call it in Irish to the present day. The dark-flowing waves of the river suggested another appellation—*Dubh-linn*, or "the black water," and by this latter name corrupted into Divelin, the Ostmen now in the twelfth century recognised it.

By a charter subsequent to his first one, King Henry granted to his colonists in Dublin further commercial privileges—freedom from payment of toll, passage and pontage throughout Normandy, England, Wales, and Ireland. He likewise attempted to procure a settlement of English colonists for the city of Waterford; but not finding it easy to persuade any to come, he graciously accorded, in the hope of making them good subjects, a charter of denization and the benefit

of the English laws to the Ostman inhabitants, who would otherwise have been turned out of their homes, like their kinsmen in Dublin.

## CHAPTER XVII.

EVENTS IN IRELAND AFTER HENRY'S DEPARTURE—RAYMOND AS GENERAL—THE BATTLE OF THURLES.

KING Henry having departed, Strongbow went to Ferns, where he gave his daughter by his first wife in marriage to Robert De Quincy, with the district of Duffrey, in Hy-Kinselah, as a portion, and with the dignity of constable of Leinster, and also the "banner and ensign," or military command of the province.* The earl and his son-in-law then marched to Kildare, and onthe refusal of O'Dempsey, lord of Clanmalier, to come in and give hostages, he directed several predatory excursions against that chieftain's territory on the Barrow side. To effect his complete reduction, Strongbow at last set out himself, but failed to effect anything beyond the burning and ravaging of the whole country. He retreated towards Kildare with his army in two divisions.

* Regan.

of which the van, consisting of 1000 men, was commanded by himself in person, and the rere or post of danger by De Quincy. On its march through the woods, the O'Dempseys attacked this rere body, routed it with great slaughter, killed De Quincy, and captured his banner of Leinster. This knight's loss was greatly lamented by the whole Norman army.* He left a daughter who was afterwards married to Philip, son of Maurice De Prendergast.

On the death of De Quincy, Raymond Le Gros demanded from Strongbow the hand of his sister Basilia, whom he had long loved and wooed, with the constableship and banner of Leinster, until De Quincy's daughter should be grown and wedded to some knight fit to assume the dignity. The earl was not willing to agree to this request, but was also unwilling to give a direct refusal; and Raymond, discontented at his prevarication, left with his own company of soldiers and returned into Wales.

While Strongbow was thus occupied in Leinster, Hugh De Lacy was rearing castles and otherwise consolidating his settlement in Meath, to the detriment of O'Melachlin, and O'Ruarc of Breffni, on whom the Ard-Righ had bestowed a

* Regan.

portion of O'Melachlin's kingdom before the invasion of the Normans. It happened that on a certain visit of Tiernan O'Ruarc to Dublin, he complained to Hugh De Lacy of injuries received from his men, and prayed redress. To settle the matter, a day was appointed for a parley at Tlactga, now the Hill of Ward, near Athboy; where O'Ruarc was killed, through his own treacherous dealing, says Cambrensis, but by the treachery of Hugh De Lacy and of one of his own people, the son of Annadh O'Ruarc, say the Four Masters; and their account is rendered the more credible, by the circumstance that we find this same son of Annadh O'Ruarc afterwards in alliance with the English, and engaged with them this same year in plundering O'Ferral's country of Annaly. Tiernan O'Ruarc's body was brought to Dublin, and gibbeted with the feet upwards at the northern extremity of the city; and his head was fixed over the gate of the fortress which occupied the site of the present castle, "a spectacle of pity and grief to the Gael."* Well it might be so, indeed, for Tiernan O'Ruarc had been one of the stoutest opponents of the ferocious invader.

The civil war in Ulster still continued, and the

* Four Masters.

Kinel-Owen, of whom the chief was O'Nial, were defeated with "prodigious havoc" by O'Donnell and the Kinel-Conal. This same year 1172, we find that a synod of clergy and laity was convoked in Connaught by Ruari O'Conor, and Kyley or Catholicus O'Duffy, archbishop of Tuam;* probably as an effort to counteract in some sort the injury to the national cause of King Henry's synod of Cashel in the early part of the year. This was no doubt the synod already alluded to as presided over by the Archbishop Gelasius.

Henry, engaged in Normandy in war with his son, now wrote to Strongbow to come over to him, and bring to his assistance whatever forces he could collect. The latter complied at once, and the king was so pleased thereat, that he bestowed on him the custody of the town of Gisors. But the Irish, hearing of their enemy's trouble over sea, began to perceive their opportunity for insurrection;† and Henry, unable to proceed against them himself, came to reflect that Strongbow, from his great influence and present wealth, was the man of his subjects most likely to find means to deal with the difficulty. He repented now that he had deprived him of the governorship of the Norman conquests in Ireland, and he forth-

* Four Masters. † Cambrensis.

with sent him back with all honour, and wrote letters to his wardens in Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, commanding them to deliver up these towns to the earl.* Strongbow on his way back persuaded Raymond Le Gros, whose great military abilities he fully appreciated, to return with him in the quality of his lieutenant. They landed at Dublin, which De Lacy formally delivered up with the supreme command, and then retired with all his followers into Meath. The Normans now resorted from all sides to Strongbow in Dublin, when he signified to them the royal pleasure, and sent garrisons of his own men to occupy Waterford and Wexford. Fitz-Bernard, Fitz-Stephen, and Prendergast he next sent away to England, where, on their journey to London, these knights distinguished themselves greatly in a victory gained over the Scots and some revolted English who had joined Henry's son against him.†

Strongbow now bestirred himself to resist the spreading insurrection; but he found his treasury empty and his soldiers unpaid. To add to the embarrassment, contention soon arose between his uncle Hervey, who had commanded his army during his absence, and Raymond Le Gros.

* Regan. † Ibid.

Hervey, though sufficiently bloodthirsty in disposition, does not seem to have been a very enterprising leader; the soldiery accused him of inertness, and, pointing to their starving condition, without food any more than money, demanded from the earl that Raymond should be appointed their captain, threatening otherwise to go home, or to desert to the enemy. Strongbow complied with this demand; Raymond was appointed general, and, immediately mustering his forces, he led them on a marauding expedition into Offaly, and brought back plenty of beef to stay their appetites for a season. This active warrior then hastened to the south, and led the army there on a similiar foray over the country about Lismore, where they collected great booty; and it would appear that they even sacked that ancient and friendly city also. They took their way back to Waterford by the sea-shore; on reaching which, probably at Dungarvan or Youghal, the vanguard found thirteen vessels out of Waterford, besides divers from other places, which they immediately loaded with their prey, meaning to transport it thus more easily. But the wind delayed them, and the townsmen of the Ostman city of Cork hearing of their doings, manned and armed thirty-two barks, and came

round to attack them where they lay. There was a "cruel fight," for the Ostmen were good sailors, but they had inferior weapons. They assailed, axe in hand, with a shower of stones from the slingers; to which the mailed strangers replied, probably from the shore as well as their ships, with the deadly crossbow. The Cork men were at last overcome, and their captain, Gilbert Mac Turger, was killed by Philip Welch; and Adam De Hereford, who commanded the Norman vessels, sailed away in triumph to Waterford.* Raymond was not up in time to witness or participate in this engagement, for he was waylaid by Diarmaid Mac Carthy and the Clan-Caura; but the light horsemen and kerns of the latter were unable to resist his steel-clad cavalry, who overthrew them after a fierce encounter, and the forayers pursued their course to Waterford, bringing with them a prey of 4,000 head of cattle. The Irish were not satisfied, however, to let this booty go so easily, and as it passed through the woods, they wrested back a portion of the spoil. The news came into the town, and the garrison sallied out in pursuit, on which occasion Meyler Fitz-Henry, following too impetuously, was surrounded in the forest, where a soldier, his single

* Cambrensis.

companion, was "hewn in pieces," and he, saved by his armour, made his way back with two darts sticking in his shield, and three in his horse. Having thus energetically provided for the sustenance of the army, Raymond, hearing of the death of his father William Fitz-Gerald, the brother of Maurice and Fitz-Stephen, went over into Wales to take possession of his property.*

The command now once more devolved upon Hervey, who, along with Strongbow, set out from Waterford to make war on O'Brien, prince of Thomond, who had recently joined himself to O'Conor. Donal Mhor O'Brien, who had hitherto been the ally of the English, as the son-in-law of Diarmaid Mac Murrogh and the brother-in-law of Strongbow, thought it high time to break with the foreigners when King Henry appointed a governor and garrison for his city of Limerick, and when he witnessed their dangerous progress in the territories of his neighbours. The meaning and purpose of this invasion had at last become apparent to the Irish chieftains, and O'Brien was the most sagacious and the ablest of them, as is proved by his subsequent career, as well as by the testimony of his enemies. He was a man of daring spirit and

* Cambrensis.

great resolution, and as wily and unscrupulous as the Norman barons themselves. No other Irish prince makes so stout a figure in resisting them, until the days of Cahal Mhor O'Conor, "the Red-handed."

Hervey and Strongbow had sent orders to Dublin for the forces there, augmented by a body of Ostmen of the city whom they had enlisted as auxiliaries, to come and join them. O'Brien, to prevent this junction, marched with his septs of the Dal-Cas from the hills of Clare and West Tipperary and plains of Limerick—Mac Namaras and Mac Mahons, O'Loughlins and O'Gradys, O'Quins and O'Deas, together with "the battalion of West Connaught," of which O'Flaherty was chief, and "the great battalion of the Siol-murray," or royal tribe of O'Conor, left with him by the Ard-Righ. With those troops the prince of Thomond attacked, near Thurles, the army from Dublin. The battle was furious and bloody, as we may well believe; for the Dal-Cas, since the days of Brian Boroimhe, had the reputation of being the bravest of the Irish, and the Normans had not yet encountered a native army which could stand against them in the open field. The impetuous valour of the men of Thomond made up, however, for the lack of shield and

corslet, and the battle-axes of the O'Briens rang on hauberk and head-piece, and with sparth and scian they made bloody passage through the invaders, to their appropriate war cry, *Lamh laidir aboo!* or "the strong hand for ever!" Very few knights were killed, but 1,700 of the other soldiers of the stranger, by the Irish account, or 400, by the English, were left dead on the field of battle. And when his fugitive horsemen brought the news to Strongbow at Cashel, that haughty baron turned his horse's rein, and fled "with a sad and heavy heart" before his light-footed enemies, "who coursed him within the walls of Waterford."*

A more resolute warrior than the Ard-Righ O'Conor had now put his hand to the national cause, and Donal O'Brien justified by a lifetime of vigorous and successful resistance to the invader, the beginning made at Thurles. The Norman could never keep his foothold in Thomond proper, though he planted castles there for a brief season, and conferred on it the name of Clare, from that of his leader.

* See Four Masters and Cambrensis. The latter historian asserts that his countrymen were surprised by O'Brien; but the Annals of the Four Masters and those of Innisfallen expressly say that the battle was won by "dint of fighting."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

EFFECTS OF THE BATTLE OF THURLES.—THE NORMANS ASSAILED EVERYWHERE.—GRANTS OF STRONGBOW AND DE LACY TO THEIR KNIGHTS.

THIS victory at Thurles gave new courage to the Irish, as it was the first pitched battle they had won against the invaders; and now, in this year 1174, "taking head from O'Brien's success, they sprang up on all sides, and the earl could not move from Waterford."* Even there he was not long safe, for the citizens, exasperated by the licentiousness of the soldiery developed during Raymond's command, rose in arms and killed 200 of the English garrison, and Strongbow was obliged to betake himself to an island near the town.†

Hugh De Lacy had been parcelling out his seigniory of Meath, including the country to the banks of the Liffey, among the knights and lords who accompanied him, and they had taken pains to consolidate their settlement by the importation of men and arms, and the erection of numerous castles. To his true friend Hugh Tyr-

* Cambrensis. † Annals of Innisfallen.

rell, De Lacy had presented Castleknock; and to William Petit, Castlebrack; to Gilbert De Nangle and his son Jocelyn, a great tract of country; to Richard Tuite, "fair possessions;" to Richard De La Chappell, "much land;" to Adam De Feipo the domains of Skryne, Clontarf, and Santry; to Gilbert De Nugent, the O'Finnellan's territory of Delvin; to William De Misset and Hugh De Hosé, or Hussey, "large inheritances;" to Geoffrey De Constantine, lands in O'Ferral's country of Annaly; to Thomas Le Fleming, Ardee; to "the valiant Meyler Fitz-Henry," to Robert De Lacy, to Adam Dullard, to "one Thomas," and to Richard Le Fleming, large tracts also.* This plantation was not effected without infinite bloodshed; and the dispossessed natives, inspirited by the defeat of the Normans in the south, now resumed their weapons under O'Ruarc and O'Melachlin; and, backed by the forces of the neighbouring princes of Uriel and Uladh, they broke out upon their spoilers, and burned and ravaged the whole colony, destroying many of the new-built forts and castles; not without hard fighting and great slaughter of their own men, nevertheless.†

* Regan.

† Ibid. The family name of the prince of Uladh, alluded to in the foregoing paragraph, and so often throughout this

Strongbow, reduced to sore strait near Waterford, and having no help to hope for in Ireland, again bethought himself of the military genius of Raymond, and of the influence his presence would have on the discouraged army, from which not only he, but Fitz-Stephen, Fitz-Gerald, De Cogan, and Prendergast, its most experienced commanders, were now absent. Having taken counsel in the matter, he writes to Raymond in Wales, to hasten to his assistance with whatever force he can collect, "and then, according to your own wish and desire, you shall assuredly and immediately on arrival marry my sister Basilia." Raymond hastened on getting this message, " not only on account of the fair lady, his love, but also that he might succour his lord and master in his necessity."* By friendship and otherwise, he got together thirty lusty young gentlemen of his kin, and 100 men at arms, and 300 foot and bowmen, the choicest that could be procured in all Wales; and then, with his cousin Meyler, he shipped them in twenty barks for Waterford. When the insurgent Ostmen of

book, was Mac Donslevy. The O'Carrols, princes of Uriel, were a distinct clan from the O'Carrols of Ely and Ossory, who made a prominent figure in later Irish history.

* Cambrensis.

that city beheld this fleet approaching "with banners displayed from the topmasts," they lost heart, and Raymond without much difficulty appeased the tumult, and extricated the discomfited earl. Collecting all their forces, they both then set out for Wexford, leaving behind a certain knight, Precell or Purcel as governor.* No sooner had they turned their backs, however, than the citizens rose again *en masse*, and butchered without mercy in every house and street the foreigners, man, woman and child; thus retaliating the similar destruction of their own people, at the capture of their city four years before. Purcel attempted to escape down the Suir in an Ostman boat, but he was murdered by the master and crew. Some of the garrison defended themselves successfully in Reginald's Tower, until succour came and until the townsmen were again put down.†

At Wexford Raymond insisted, before proceeding further in restoring the fortune of the war, that his promised marriage with the Lady Basilia should be made good. The earl accordingly sent for his sister to Dublin, where she was residing. On her arrival, the nuptials were duly solemnized, "and they spent all that day and

* Cambrensis. † Cambrensis and Ware.

night in feasting and pastimes." Earl Richard now bestowed on his valiant lieutenant the constableship and banner of Leinster, with the lands of Fothart in modern Wicklow, Idrone, "Glascarrig by the sea," and probably that district near Kilkenny which was inherited by his eldest son, and his posterity the family of Grace. At the same time he bestowed on Hervey one tract in Hy-Kinselah; and another on Prendergast, in performance of his promise when he brought him into Ireland at his first landing. To Meyler Fitz-Henry he gave Carbery, and to Maurice Fitz-Gerald the Naas, both taken from Mac Faelain; to Fitz-Gerald he also gave the castle which the Ostmen called Wykenloe or Wicklow, and the Irish Kilmanton. On John De Clahul the marshalship of Leinster and lands near Leighlin were bestowed, and on Robert De Bermingham part of Offaly. To Adam De Hereford he gave large possessions near Leixlip; to Myles Fitz-David, one of his favorites, Overk in Ossory; to a certain knight, Sir Reynaud, fifteen knights' fees near the sea; to Robert Fitz-Richard, the Narragh in modern Kildare; to Robert De Borard and to Walter De Ridleford, extensive districts, the names of which, as supplied by the chronicler Regan, do not indicate their present locality. As Henry

had dealt with his barons, so did Strongbow now with his knights, whom he thus interested in the defence and conquest of his inheritance of Leinster.

In the meanwhile, Ruari O'Conor had gathered a great army with all his magnates—O'Dowda and the clans of Hy-Fiachra, O'Kelly and those of Hy-Maine, Mac Dermot from Moylurg, O'Seaghnessy, O'Flanagan, &c., and, joined by a body of Ulster auxiliaries, he crossed the Shannon and swept over Meath "with sword and fire, destroying even to the walls of Dublin, and taking and uprooting every castle, not leaving one standing."* De Lacy had gone to England, most likely to procure assistance against the insurgent Meathmen, and had entrusted the custody of his great castle of Trim to Sir Hugh Tyrrell. It was principally against this fortress that King Ruari had directed his expedition; and a Norman record informs us that it was "environed with a large and deep ditch, and was furnished and completely garnished." Tyrrell, when advertised of the approach of the Irish, despatched messengers to Strongbow, beseeching him to come to his aid. The messengers arrived at Wexford in the very middle of Raymond's marriage feast; and that

* Cambrensis.

captain, ever alive to the call of duty, the very next morning left his bride, and, mustering the army, set out with De Clare. The Irish, a teachable people, appear to have already improved considerably in military knowledge by these wars with the Normans; for only a short time before a "strong castle" with fosse and donjon and towers need not have feared their multitudes. Now, however, the garrison found their fortalice too weak, and so they abandoned and burned it before the enemy came up. The garrison of Dunleek, the last Norman stronghold north of Dublin, did the same thing. "When the Irish perceived how that was done to their hand which they intended to have done by force, they returned towards their own countries."* The earl, on his way hearing of the catastrophe, nevertheless marched on; but when he came to Trim "he found neither castle nor house to lodge in, wherefore he made no stay, but pursuing the enemy, slew 150 of their rear body or stragglers; after which he returned to Dublin, and Hugh Tyrrell to the ruined castle of Trim, to re-edify it before De Lacy's return from England."†

"The earl thought he had pacified Leinster" by distributing it among his knights; but the

* Regan. † Ibid.

Irish very naturally conspire to resist this wholesale robbery, "though their hostages are in his hands"—Mac Faelain, Mac Gilleholmoc, O'More of Leix, O'Byrne of the Duffrey, O'Dempsey, O'Donegan, and the septs of Hy-Kinsellah,* and not least, Donal Kavanagh, who had at last found reason to be disgusted with his allies, and who appears to have asked King Henry for his father's kingdom of Leinster, when his sister Eva, Strongbow's wife, proved his illegitimacy, and that of his brother Enna.†

Those chiefs now rose in arms,‡ but we have no particulars of their struggle. Donal Kavanagh was killed in the year 1175 by two of his vassals, O'Nolan and O'Forehan.§

We are told of certain matrimonial alliances between the Norman lords which took place this year. Hervey was wedded to Nesta, the daughter of Maurice Fitz-Gerald; and Raymond procured

* Moriertach or Murtogh, the chief elected by the clans of Hy-Kinselah after King Diarmaid's death, was his brother, and was surnamed "Na-Gael," or of the Irish, in contradistinction to Diarmaid, who was surnamed "Na-Gall," or of the foreigners.

† Pedigree of family of Kavanagh in Carew Collection of MSS. quoted by Dr. O'Donovan in note to translation of the Four Masters.

‡ Regan. § Four Masters.

the marriage of Alina, Strongbow's daughter, with his cousin William, brother of Nesta.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

PROCLAMATION OF THE BULL AND 'PRIVILEGE' AT WATERFORD—RAYMOND'S EXPEDITION AGAINST LIMERICK.

KING Henry, though engaged in his wars in Normandy and England, was not unmindful, says Cambrensis, "of the evil and loose life of the Irish." We have no doubt at all that he was strongly disgusted at the improved resistance which these people were every where making against the arms of his rapacious soldiery. At the Synod of Cashel, the subtle monarch had taken care to procure from every archbishop and bishop present, letters with their seals pendent in the manner of charters, making over Ireland to him and his heirs, testifying thereby their acquiescence in Pope Adrian's bull.* He now despatched Ralph, archdeacon of Llandaff, with a transcript of these letters to Pope Alexander; who, guided by his predecessor's judgment, and

* Bromton, abbot of Jovenal's Chronicle.

the apparently full concurrence in it of the Irish clergy, confirmed that bull, and granted the privilege that under his authority Henry should be lord over all the realm of Ireland, "and that he should reduce and bring it to the christian faith, after the order and manner of the church of England." Pope Alexander had three copies of this "privilege" made,—one for King Henry, one for the legate and clergy of Ireland, and one for the Irish princes and chiefs.* The monarch, overjoyed at his prize, despatched Nicholas Wallingford, prior of Malmesbury, and William Fitz-Adelm De Burgo, to convey the privilege across. They landed at Waterford, where they caused an assembly of all the bishops and clergy to be convoked; and there, in the open audience of the people the said document was read and published, and also Pope Adrian's bull of which it was the confirmation. At the same time, Henry's agents took care that the clergy in his interest should denounce sentence of excommunication against all who disobeyed by daring to resist his authority.† Adrian's bull had not been previously published to the laity, but Henry must have before this availed himself of

* See Bromton, Hovenden, and Cambrensis.

† The Book of Howth.

its authority with the Irish clergy. We cannot otherwise comprehend their ready attendance at the Synod of Cashel, and compliance there with his requests. We can imagine the indignation which Archbishops Laurence and Gelasius, and the patriotic portion of the native hierarchy, must have felt at the wiles wherewith the Norman King had thus succeeded in bringing down on them the sore displeasure of the heads of the church, of which they were truly faithful members—out of order only in matters of mere discipline,* and obediently ready to correct that, if indeed they had not corrected it before.

The student who does not take into account the influence of the decrees of Popes Adrian and Alexander on a people of strong devotional feeling like the Irish, will be puzzled to understand why their resistance to the Normans was not more enthusiastic and united. They fought under a depressing cloud in fighting for their country. Whatever may have been their national faults of morality, they could scarcely have been worse christians than the warriors who came to them in the character of reformers. It would have been well indeed if Alexander the Third could have visited Ireland before acceding to

* Lynch's Cambrensis Eversus.

Henry's wishes, and beheld the conduct of the Norman barons whose characters we have given from the pen of their countryman and kinsman Cambrensis. What the Irish clergy came to think of their invaders we see in the annals of the monks of Innisfallen, where they tell us that Strongbow was the most cruel destroyer of the Irish, both clerics and laymen, that came to the island since the days of Turges the Dane. After the death of Pope Alexander in 1181, Henry attempted to get the "privilege" renewed by his successor Lucius the Third, but he was disappointed this time, for that pontiff took no notice of his application.*

* Some writers have attempted to cast doubts on the authenticity of the two bulls procured by the artifices and agents of Henry, but they produce no arguments in support of the view, which is simply and sufficiently refuted by O'Halloran in his history of Ireland, vol. 3, page 363, when he says:— "We have every reason to think them genuine. They were published in the life-time of Alexander, by Cambrensis, (an ecclesiastic) who, though in most instances a man as devoid of truth and candour as any that ever took up the pen, yet would not presume, on the present occasion, to publish a bull as Alexander's, if he was not well authorised so to do; and the authenticity of this confirms that of the other."

Of the effect produced in aid of the Norman arms by these bulls, we find the following testimony in the well-known letter addressed by O'Niall in 1330 to Pope John, asking his help

And now, in this year 1175, while the doings in Waterford are vivid in the national mind, Strongbow gathers all his forces to assail O'Brien, whom he justly deemed his most formidable opponent.* It was the month of October, but he resolved to strike a blow before the winter set in. The rendezvous was appointed in Ossory, and Raymond took the command of the army, which was augmented by the forces of Mac Gill-Phadraig, the bitter foe of O'Brien; and whose son was killed this year by the latter,† and who now offered to guide the expedition to the town of Limerick. Raymond doubts him at first, but his ally protests with such fervency his desire for vengeance on the prince of Thomond, that he is trusted in the matter and proves sincere.‡ They arrived at Limerick, an Ostman city subject to O'Brien and surrounded by the Shannon, which is found to be so deep and muddy that the army cannot pass. The soldiers, discouraged

against the oppression of the English :—"During the course of so many ages our sovereigns preserved the independence of their country; attacked more than once by foreign powers, they wanted neither force nor courage to expel the bold invaders; but that which they dared to do against force, they could not against the simple decree of one of your predecessors."

* Regan. † Four Masters. ‡ Regan.

by the hardships of the march, and now by this new obstacle, wish to retire;* when a knight called David Welch, a Welchman by birth and family, and distinguished by his valour and tall stature, impatiently rode into the river, though the current was dangerous and his armour heavy. He swam his horse over, and called aloud that he had discovered a ford; but only one knight, Sir Geoffrey, ventured to follow. Finding themselves unsupported, the two re-entered the stream to come back, when Geoffrey's horse was carried away by the current, and he was drowned. Meyler Fitz-Henry, ashamed at this circumstance, now dashed in by himself and gained the opposite side, where he was assailed with stones by some of the townsmen, who discovered him from the walls. While he was protecting himself with his shield, Raymond came up from the rear, and seeing the position of his kinsman about to be overwhelmed by his enemies, he reproached his soldiers for their backwardness, and spurred immediately into the water. The whole army, aroused by his taunt and example, followed at once, and got over safe, with the exception of a knight, one Sir Guy, and two soldiers, drowned. The townsmen, who were coming down to the

* Regan.

river bank, now fled back to their gate pursued by the Normans, who entered with them and sacked the city. This event took place on a Tuesday, a day which would seem to have been peculiarly unlucky for these Ostmen, for on it, by a curious coincidence, Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin were also taken by the invaders.

Raymond fortified and provisioned the town, and, leaving there fifty knights, two hundred men-at-arms, and two hundred bowmen under his cousin Myles of St. David's, he returned to Leinster.*

About this same time, Manus O'Melachlin, lord of East Meath, or as much of it as the Normans had left him, was hanged by De Lacy's men after they had taken him by treachery at Trim.†

* Cambrensis. † Four Masters.

## CHAPTER XX.

A SECOND EXPEDITION TO LIMERICK—KING RUARI'S SUBMISSION AND TREATY WITH KING HENRY—SUCCESSES OF THE O'NIALLS IN MEATH—THE DEATH OF STRONGBOW.

MEANWHILE Hervey, envious of the success of his rival Raymond Le Gros, had sent messengers across to King Henry, to represent that that general was tampering with the army, with the design of establishing an independent dominion of his own; and also charging him, truly enough, with driving the Irish to revolt by the unbridled licence he permitted his soldiers. The jealous king, ever distrustful of the intention of his lieges in Ireland, when the winter was past, sent across four of his household, Robert Le Poer, Osbert De Herlotor, William De Bendeger, and Adam of Gervason or Gernimie, two of them to bring Raymond before him, and the other two to remain and observe the conduct of Strongbow. Raymond prepared to depart with them, and they were waiting only for a favourable wind, when couriers came from the garrison of Limerick praying help with all speed, for O'Brien was besieging them with a numerous army. Strongbow mus-

ters his soldiers, but they refuse to undertake the enterprise unless commanded by their old general, in whose skill, particularly since the rout at Thurles, they alone have confidence. Here is a difficulty. King Henry's officers, in whose charge Raymond is departing, are consulted, and they consent under the circumstances that he shall first go and relieve their beleaguered countrymen. They accordingly set out. There were 80 knights, 200 men-at-arms, and 300 archers, with Raymond; but the bulk of his army was composed of native troops—the men of Ossory from their chieftain's feud with O'Brien, and the septs of Hy-Kinselah, and "divers other Irish," probably for pay.

As they advanced, word came to them that the prince of Thomond had raised the siege of Limerick, and like a prudent leader had marched to meet them at a pass in the woods near Cashel, which he had strengthened with intrenchments and stockades. Raymond approaches the position, and divides his army into three bodies. When in battle array, Mac Gill-Phadraig perceiving, on the part of his allies, what he took to be a disinclination to the fight, addressed them in a loud voice, and warned them that they had no alternative but to conquer; for that he and his clansmen, who would give them good help in the

assault, would turn their axes on them if they gave back. This speech is curious, as showing the furious hatred which the Irish chiefs so often entertained towards each other, and as a proof of the independent relations which this sturdy prince of Ossory still maintained with the Normans, though he was the first native lord assailed after their landing.

The danger of being placed between two fires is a sufficient incentive to an immediate advance, and the vanguard led by Meyler rushes forward like "a blast of wind," followed by the rest of the troops. The entrenchments are carried, the pass is forced, and Raymond marches to Limerick, which he enters on Easter Tuesday to the great joy of the garrison; and they all set to work to repair the damage inflicted by the siege.*

The prince of Thomond seems to have now become desirous of a suspension of hostilities with the Normans. He was influenced to it no doubt by a renewal of his differences with O'Conor, who afterwards this year invaded his country.† After some overtures on the subject, a day was appointed for a conference, and Donal O'Brien encamped on the shore of Lough Deargh while Raymond halted near Killaloe. To this same

* Cambrensis. † Four Masters.

conference King Ruari O'Conor likewise came, but remained with his train in boats on the lake.

Immediately after the Synod of Waterford, and in obedience to the bulls read thereat, for his kingdom of Connaught was yet unassailed, O'Conor had sent three ambassadors to Henry in England, viz. O'Duffy Archbishop of Tuam, the Abbot of St. Brendan of Clonfert, and "Laurence his chancellor," to offer his submission, and to arrange the terms of accommodation. The king of England convoked a parliament at Windsor, (October 1175) at which these ambassadors attended with other Irish prelates, among whom was Lorcan O'Tuathal, and a treaty was then made. By its conditions the Irish Ard-Righ acknowledged Henry as his liege lord, and the latter then granted that the Irish king should hold his land in peace under him by paying an annual tribute. The provincial kings were to be dependent as before upon Roderick, and their tribute to Henry was to pass through his hands. This tribute, on condition of which there was to be peace throughout Ireland, was a merchantable hide of every tenth head of cattle killed. Among some minor dues prescribed, we find presents of hawks and hounds, both of which from this country were held in great esteem. O'Conor's authority, it

was arranged, was not to extend over the settlements of the Norman barons.* In the same parliament, Henry began to exercise the privilege of nominating to the Irish sees; and to conciliate the native clergy, he appointed an Irishman, Augustin, to the vacant bishopric of Waterford.†

O'Conor's presence at this conference near Killaloe was to render fealty to the representative of the king of England, according to the terms of the treaty concluded at Windsor a few months before.‡ And now an invitation came to the Normans in Limerick from Mac Carthy prince of Desmond, asking help against his rebellious son. Raymond embraced the opportunity, and after a campaign in which Desmond suffered considerably, its prince was confirmed in his authority; and the rebellious son was taken prisoner, confined, and soon after had his head cut off. The foolish Mac Carthy, in his gratitude, conferred on Raymond an extensive district in Kerry, which the latter afterwards transmitted to his younger son Maurice, whose descendants became the Irish sept known as the Clan-Maurice or Fitz-Maurices, barons of Lixnaw.

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* Bromton, Hovenden, and Ware. † Ware.

‡ Cambrensis.

All this time, as may be imagined, ruthless work was going on in Meath. Richard Le Fleming, one of De Lacy's barons, had built a strong castle at Slane; and from thence as his head-quarters, he was accustomed to harry at his leisure fertile Louth and the Irish districts of Meath. Merciless forays they were,—

> "And for many a league you could mark their trail,
> By burning roof-tree and woman's wail."

But the hour of retribution for Richard Le Fleming was at hand. O'Carrol of Uriel, unable to cope with these marauding neighbours, besought his suzerain O'Niall to help him. And now the Kinel-Owen come down from the mountains of Tyrone, and they camp by the Boyne, and storm Slane, and slaughter Richard Le Fleming and every living thing in his castle, even to the chargers in the stable. They killed in the castle five hundred men, say the Irish annalists; "besides women, children, and horses!" Such was the terror produced by this deed, that the very next day the Normans "abandoned and left desolate the three other castles of Kells, Galtrim, and Derrypatrick.*

* Four Masters.

Mr. Moore in his History speaks of the capture of Slane Castle as a surprise; I know not on what authority, for I can

While Raymond is consolidating his new possessions in Kerry, a messenger comes to him from Dublin, and brings him the following letter from his wife, the earl's sister :—" To Raymond, her most loving lord and husband, his own Basilia wisheth health as to herself. Know ye, my dear lord, that my great cheek tooth which was wont to ache so much is now fallen out. Wherefore, if ye have any care or regard for me or for yourself, come away with all speed."

Raymond at once divined the hidden meaning of this letter. He remembered that he had left his brother-in-law grievously sick in Dublin, and he now rightly guessed that Strongbow was dead, and that his friends were afraid to make the news too soon known, from the effect it might have on the Irish. He also truly conjectured that Hervey was seeking to exclude him from succeeding to the government, and that Basilia was apprehen-

find none for it in the original accounts. If it was only a surprise, the garrisons of the three neighbouring castles would have no occasion to abandon them the next morning before they were assailed. The assertion is in keeping, however, with the writer's habit of bestowing a discoloring gloss on any successes of his countrymen. Mr. Moore, the English pensioner, was a very different individual from Thomas Moore the Irish bard.

sive of her letter being intercepted. Raymond communicated the intelligence to only a few of his trustiest friends. They saw the necessity of immediately returning with all their forces to Dublin. Raymond accordingly hastens to Limerick, and esteeming his army too weak without its garrison, he finds it indispensable to abandon the town, or else deliver it to the prince of Thomond, who had lately sworn fealty, to keep for the king of England. He knows this to be a dangerous experiment; but there is no alternative, and making a virtue of necessity, he hands it over as an act of grace, at the same time taking hostages from O'Brien as additional security in the matter. Donal Mhor fully fathoms the transaction; and scarcely were the Normans over the bridge, when it was broken down behind them, and the city, fired in four quarters at once, rose in flames to the sky before their eyes,—O'Brien exclaiming "that no English should harbour there again." We may well believe the rage of Raymond and his army at this spectacle, for they had left Limerick "well walled, fortified, and victualled."*

Richard De Clare died in June, 1176, of a mortification in the foot. The last moments of

* Cambrensis.

the dying warrior were rendered ghastly by the recollection of his numerous atrocities, and he shrieked aloud that he saw Saint Brigid, whose church at Kildare he had burned, killing him.* Despite that gentle bearing of which Cambrensis tells us, the image of Strongbow is chiefly recognizable to us by his ferocity. The testimony of another English chronicler, William of Newbridge, confirms what the Irish annalists say of his unscrupulous rapacity. The story, whether true or not, of his execution of his son for cowardice, shows that he left an impression as the first William did in England for "starkness" and inflexible valour, those invariable characteristics of the martial Norman race. It was to his inherited power and influence in England, and thereby his position as the restorer of Mac Murrogh that he owes his prominence in history, for his mental qualifications were inconsiderable. He does not seem to have been a very able statesman, and as a general he appears to have been nothing without his right arm Raymond Le Gros. His body was by his own order reserved for burial until the arrival of Raymond, when the funeral rites were performed by Archbishop Laurence, and the remains of the great Norman invader of Ireland

* Four Masters.

were consigned to their last resting place in the Church of the Holy Trinity, now Christ Church, in this city of Dublin.

This puissant baron, besides being chief governor in Ireland for King Henry, and by his wife prince of Leinster, was lord of Tottenham, Alverdiston, Wollaston, and Cardigan, earl of Pembroke and Strigul in Wales, and of Ogie in Normandy, earl of Leicester, and earl marshal of England. He left by his wife Eva an only daughter Isabel, married fourteen years after to William, earl marshal.* The present Royal Hospital at Kilmainham was founded and largely endowed by Strongbow as a preceptory for the Knights Templars.

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In the foregoing chapters I have chronicled the rise and progress of the Norman Invasion, down to the formality of King Ruari's submission and the death of Strongbow. I have not chronicled the English Conquest of Ireland, because to do so I should extend this record down to the end of the sixteenth century, and to the close of Elizabeth's reign, instead of that of Henry Fitz-

* Campion's Chronicle.

Empress. The resistance of the Irish so far, though disjointed and without fixity of purpose, has still been sufficient to prove that, if the Ard-Righ Ruari had been a man of boldness and capacity, or had possessed the spirit, energy, and captainship of any one of the minor chiefs—O'Brien of Thomond, Mac Gill-Phadraig of Ossory, O'Ruarc of Breffni, or the Ostman, Asculf of Dublin—the struggle would have been different, and the Norman invasion would have been foiled at least in the time of Henry the Second. At Strongbow's death, the Norman dominion in Ireland appears to have extended (according to our modern arrangement by counties) over the whole of Dublin, all or nearly all of Kildare, the sea coast of Wicklow, considerable portions of Wexford, Carlow and Kilkenny, most of Meath, large tracts in Westmeath, and a few in Longford. In Munster they possessed some districts in Waterford, Tipperary and Cork, and that tract in Kerry which Mac Carthy had bestowed on Raymond. They subsequently invaded and settled in portions of Ulster and Connaught; but their territory in all these provinces, instead of being increased in succeeding ages, was vastly diminished by the attacks of the Irish, and by the defection of the outlying Norman colonists, who

intermarried with the Gael, and, adopting their manners, names, and hostility to English rule, became "more Irish than the Irish themselves." It was only after the protracted and sanguinary wars of Elizabeth's reign, that an English monarch first obtained sway over all this island.

THE END.

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